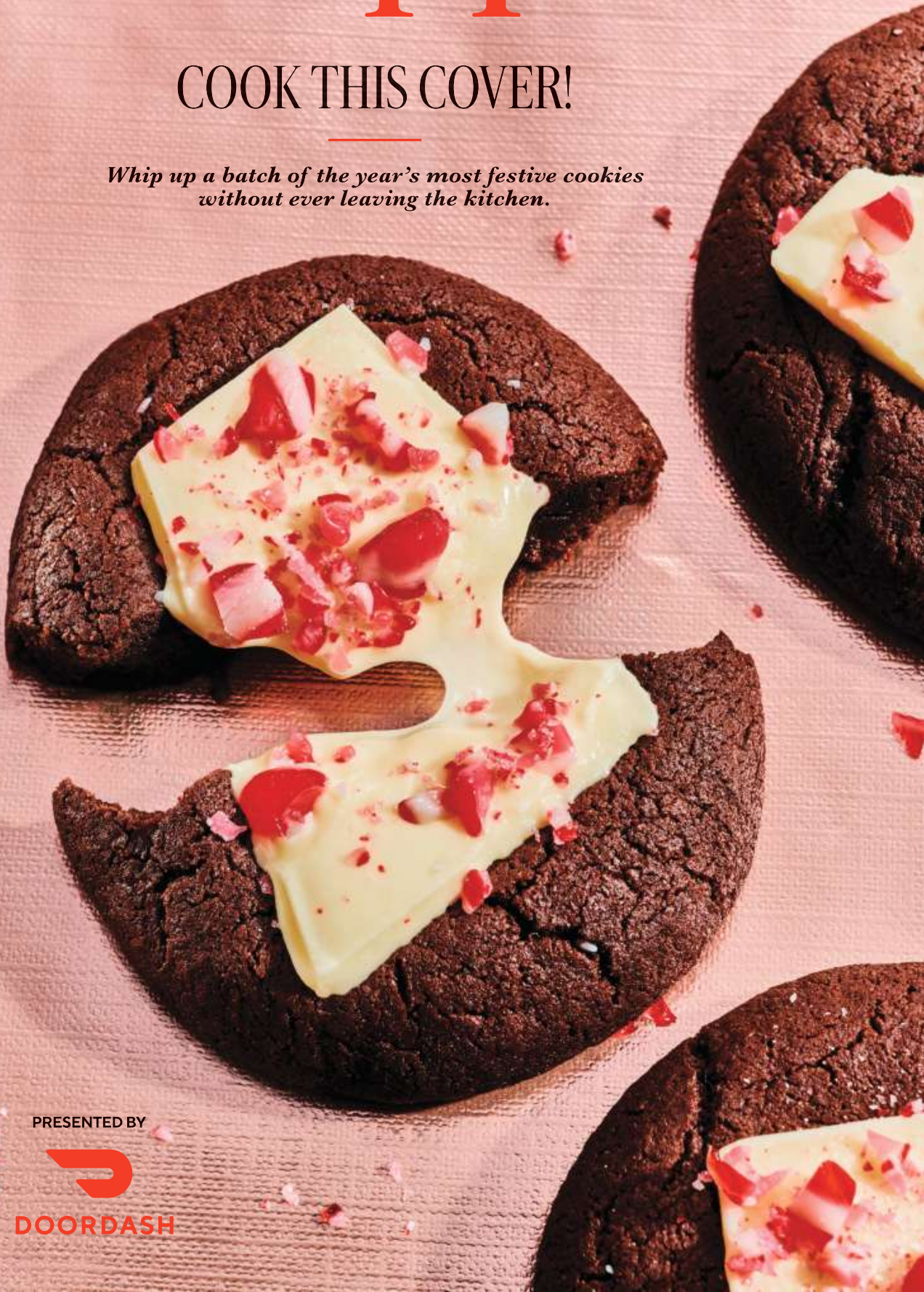


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THE HOLIDAY ISSUE

bon appétit



SPARKLE

◆
CHAMPAGNE AND
OTHER BUBBLES P. 60

◆
JUST ADD
GLITTER P. 86

& CHEER

◆
STUNNING HOLIDAY
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◆
FOOD LOVER'S
GIFT GUIDE P. 9

◆
Golden Hour
p. 64



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Photograph by Travis Rainey.
Food styling by Judy Kim.
Prop styling by Stephanie De Luca



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SEASONING'S GREETINGS



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From the Editor

Editor in chief Jamila Robinson shares what's on her mind this month

I relish the period of reflection that comes after the holiday parties and before the new year.

It's filled with best-of lists, from everything we ate, our favorite trips, and the recipes we tried. As the covers of *Bon Appétit* filled my office over the past year, a collage of stories, stunning photography, transportive dining experiences, and new recipes emerged: a mood board of food culture worthy of a toast.

Our team has accomplished so much this year, including snagging a James Beard Award for our video series *Street Eats*, and a triumphant celebration of 2024's Best New Restaurants in Portland, Oregon. As I scrolled through Instagram drafts from meals that never made it onto my feed, and hearted moments for my 2024 highlight reel, I found picking my favorite covers a much easier task.

The March issue, my first, remains at the top of my list. That hot dog with accoutrement springs from its royal blue background—the best beauty shot from Taste of the Town, the feature where we visit a city and sample the most iconic local cuisine. That image illustrates my perspective that restaurant coverage should capture the entire landscape—whether it's snack food in Chicago or haute cuisine in Copenhagen. That same spirit is represented in our

May Drinks issue. For the first time in more than 50 years we devoted an entire issue to beverages. It gave us a chance to restock our bar carts, included everything from coffee to soju, and showcased how vodka plays in the kitchen. We also highlighted nonalcoholic cocktails, proving that bars are serving more than alcohol.

Those reflections show our team is constantly adapting our cooking and dining to mirror how our readers experience food in the world.

My two other favorite issues were explorations of the ways food shapes society. Our Relationships issue focused on how food creates connection, while our Sports issue celebrated everything from the dishes that promote health to the ones that are best for a tailgate. Both were triumphs of home cooking, and shared guides for using food as a through line for other parts of life.

That leads me to our 2024 holiday issue theme, Sparkle and Cheer, which fills the pages with clever takes on celebrations. Our gift guide was created for the food obsessive (page 9). We'll show you how to bling out savory dishes with edible glitter (page 86). And toasts go to Jesse Szewczyk, whose delightful slate of cookies (page 74) will become instant classics. We'll know exactly which bottles



to open thanks to Sam Stone's guide to Champagne and other bubbles (page 60).

I'm grateful to everyone who has picked up this magazine, made a recipe from the Epicurious app, or watched a video. Here's to all the dishes we hope to see on your TikTok feed.

My Favorite New Recipes

Gluten-Free Chocolate Cake

I've added this recipe from the March issue to my arsenal of allergen-friendly baked goods. It's as delicious as it is celebratory and makes for a great dessert option for friends and family with dietary restrictions.

Butteriest Black Pepper Fish

I cook this easy recipe when I come across fresh flounder in the market, and make use of Burlap & Barrel's Zanzibar Black Peppercorns.

One-Pot French Onion Pasta

Onion gratinée is one of my favorite soups to make, and this simple one-pot dish gives that familiar flavor profile to shells and can be made after work. I prefer to scale it down to 1–2 servings.

SHARE THE JOY!



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OUR CHEESES AND
FIND RECIPES



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TEST KITCHEN
TIPS, RECIPES, *and*
RECOMMENDATIONS

Table Talk

RESTAURANTS,
TRAVEL, *and* FOOD
FOR THOUGHT



◆
The sturdy **Marcato Atlas 150 Pasta Maker** (\$89; amazon.com) is one of our favorite gifts. It rolls smooth sheets of pasta at adjustable thicknesses and cuts dough into three shapes. Don't have pastaios on your list? We've got something for bakers, latte lovers, dinner party hosts, and even those relatives you're keen to impress.

THE 2024 BON APPÉTIT GIFT GUIDE

BY CARINA FINN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
MARCUS McDONALD



For the Home-Sweet-Homebody



Don't forget the friend who loves to brew a warm bev and binge *The Great British Baking Show* on the couch. The most dedicated baker on your list will nerd out for **Goldie** by **Sourhouse** (\$130; sourhouse.co), a science-lab-chic sourdough starter warmer that keeps the dough in the "Goldilocks Zone" of 75 to 82 degrees. See page 14 for more cozy gifts.

MAKE THE
holidays
MEMORABLE

Bring out the sweetest smells of the holiday season with a little McCormick Ground Cinnamon and a dash of rich McCormick Vanilla. Then watch as you turn every treat into the talk of the table.



Find more
recipes



For the Host With the Most

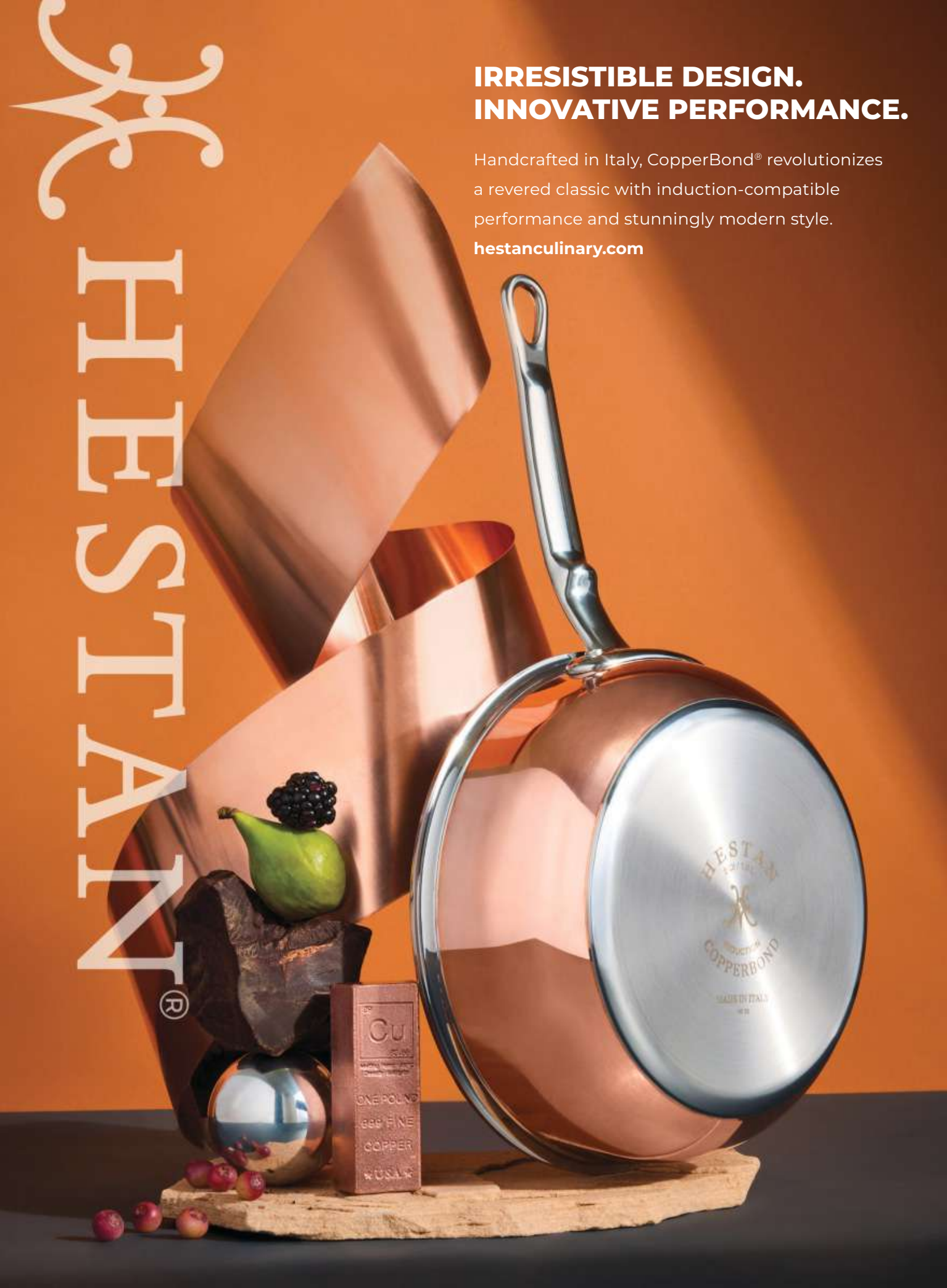
◆
A great dinner party host needs great entertaining equipment. New York retailer **Big Night's Dirty Martini Gift Box** (\$185; bignightbk.com) adds panache to any dining room drinks program with a set of color-blocked martini glasses and stainless-steel cocktail picks. Turn the page for more hosting gifts that double as conversation pieces.



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◆◆ FOR THE HOME-SWEET-HOMEBODY ◆◆

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the ideal water
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\$2,800; williams-sonoma.com



◆ **ELIA OLIVE OIL CAKE MIX COLLECTION**

Subtly sweet and luxuriously textured, these Greek-inspired cake mixes take approximately five minutes to throw together, which is far less time than a flight to the Mediterranean. They come in lemon vanilla, dark chocolate espresso, and citrus almond. \$87; eliaelia.co



◆ **PROPER SYRUPS**

Sweeten your cup with all-natural syrups made from organic cane sugar and agave. With rich flavors like strawberry, lavender, and pistachio, they're crafted for specialty coffee.

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◆◆ FOR THE HOST WITH THE MOST ◆◆

◆ THE FLORAL SOCIETY LOVELY TAPER CANDLES

Add drama to any dinner party with these 12- or 18-inch paraffin wax candles. Each stick is dipped 35 times to achieve deep, rich color.

Lasting up to 15 hours a stick, this candlelight will linger as long as those late-night conversations.

From \$60;
food52.com



◆ HOLCOMB STUDIO PUDDLE COASTERS

For the most fastidious type A hosts on your list, these heavyweight, nonslip, stainless-steel coasters will catch every drip of condensation.

\$48; holcombstudio.com



◆ MINNA MERIDIAN APRON

Even if you're popping in and out of the kitchen to greet guests in a sauce-spattered apron, you can still look cute.

This apron's thoughtful design has a big pocket and a loop for hanging a kitchen towel. Plus, it's machine-washable.

\$168; minna-goods.com



A HOLIDAY TO REMEMBER ABOARD REGENT

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Season of Joy

Thanksgiving is an elaborate epicurean affair, with onboard chefs really showing off their skills—even the baristas get in the spirit by making pumpkin-spiced lattes. During Hanukkah, you may light candles and find latkes, gefilte fish, and matzo ball soup on the menu. Throughout December, the bakers cre-



During the holidays the ships are decorated with festive lights, wreaths, and even mistletoe for added romance.

ate splendid gingerbread villages, and bartenders gladly serve eggnog. Around the ship, you may run into Christmas carolers and even Santa himself. And when the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve, you can't help but be overwhelmed with joy to be celebrating with friends and family in such an extraordinary environment.

A Feast Every Night

No matter the season or the celebration, across every elegant onboard restaurant, guests may dine whenever and with whomever they wish, indulging in superb menus and extensive wine lists with vintages from France, Italy, South Africa, and Chile—and all of it completely included. Plus, each wine is expertly paired with your meal to enhance the experience, from full-bodied reds alongside succulent steaks at Prime 7 to crisp whites that perfectly complement the delicate, fresh seafood at Chartreuse.

Whether you're a connoisseur or simply enjoy a glass of fine wine, every sip on board is designed to delight, offering a curated journey of the world's finest vineyards without ever leaving the ship.

Epicurean Explorations™ Ashore

And yet, you will certainly not want to miss the opportunity to explore the exciting ports of call on your itinerary.



Attractions such as Christmas carolers create a festive atmosphere aboard Regent's holiday season cruises.



Imagine waking up to the gentle sway of the ocean and starting your day with a master class from a renowned chef. As you sail to breathtaking destinations, each stop brings new opportunities to savor local flavors and learn from culinary experts. That was the inspiration behind the immersive experiences called Epicurean Explorations™.

These shoreside culinary tours in every region invite you to explore historic markets, sample regional beverages, witness traditional cooking methods, and taste local specialties. Regent also offers themed Epicurean Land Programs before or after select voyages that are all about experiencing unique flavors and rich culinary heritages.

Unwrap the World's Most Luxurious Holiday

Why stay in the cold when you could ring in the holidays on a tropical beach along Africa's coast or explore the Mediterranean's historic splendor? Let Regent Seven Seas Cruises make your holiday season one to remember. Raise a glass of Champagne, savor gourmet holiday meals, and immerse yourself in cultural experiences across the globe, all while knowing that everything—from fine dining to enriching shore excursions—is included.

You deserve to celebrate in luxury.



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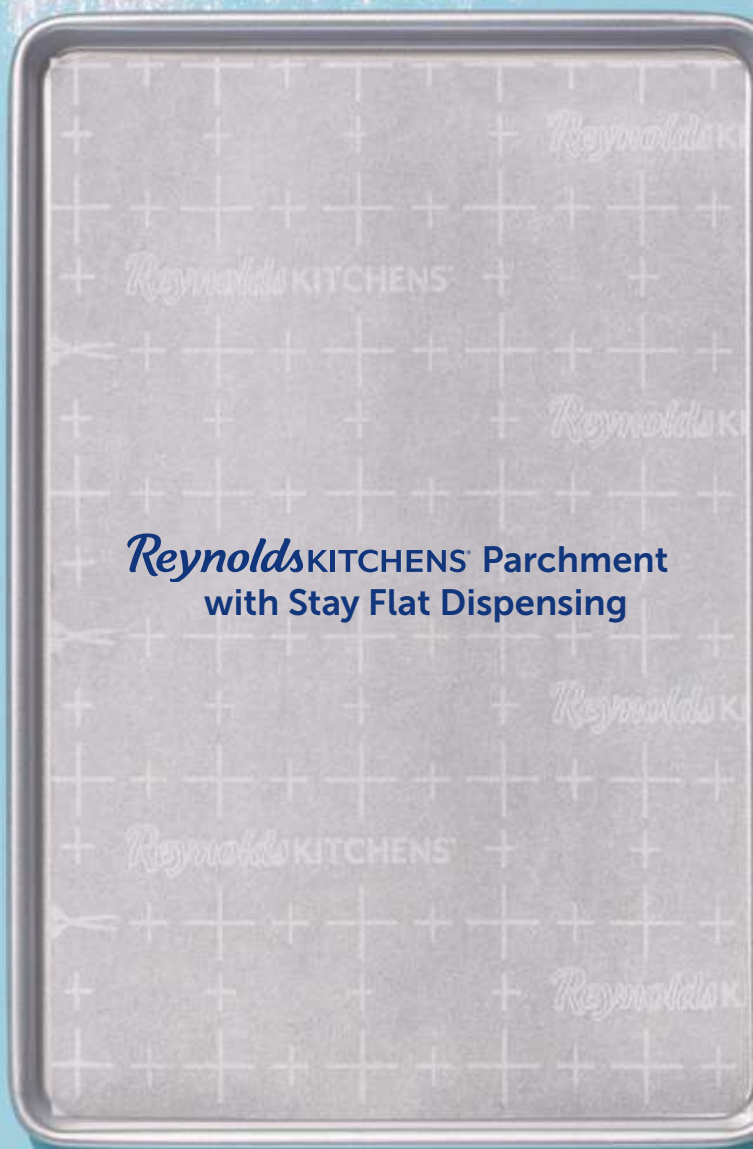
For the Self-Care Superstar



◆
Have someone on your list who's wellness-inclined? We've got you covered. **Sarah Kersten Studio's Fermentation Jar**, here in Monterey Blue (from \$140; sarahkersten.com), boasts a wide mouth and waterlock seal and comes in elegant colorways so those funky ferments can stew with style. For more of our picks, head to page 25.



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Learn More

For the Home Cook With (Almost) Everything



◆ Functional, stylish kitchen gear is always at the top of a home cook's wish list. With a lid and ergonomic handle, **All-Clad D3 Tri-Ply Stainless Steel Covered Fry Pan** (from \$100; williams-sonoma.com) is versatile enough to brown, sauté, or braise anything on the menu. See more classic cookware on page 26.



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A DELICIOUS GETAWAY

Some call it hospitality, Charleston calls it the endless welcome. Discover the charm of the Charleston area this holiday season!



Post House



The Rooftop at the Vendue



Halls Chophouse

CHECK IN & LET THE FUN BEGIN

Check in to **The Charleston Place** where nightly snowfall transforms this festive hotel into a winter wonderland. Get settled in the heart of the Historic District, where you'll find charming streets adorned with twinkling lights and holiday cheer.

Celebrate the season with happy hour at **Little Palm**, featuring a holiday pop-up named "Little Pine" at **The Ryder Hotel**. You'll be transported to a holiday state of mind on the pool deck with private gondolas perfect for cozying up in with a joyful cocktail in hand.

Dine at **82 Queen** and enjoy classic Southern cuisine such as their famous barbecue shrimp and grits and the crab soup. Toast to the start of a perfect weekend with a special winter sangria.

ADVENTURE AWAITS: EXPLORE & INDULGE

Start your day with a hearty breakfast at **Millers All Day** where you can fuel up on deviled crab fritters and biscuits and gravy. Don't miss a seasonal latte to get into the winter spirit.

Enjoy a leisurely lunch at **Post House**, a coastal tavern nestled in the heart of the Old Village. Head downtown and as you stroll through Charleston, soak in the holiday atmosphere with lively markets and winter-time-inspired window displays.

Indulge in a festive happy hour at **The Rooftop at The Vendue**. Try a specialty cocktail while admiring the twinkling lights and cheerful decor draped throughout the property.

For dinner, head to **Wild Common** for a

memorable dining experience. With a multi-course tasting menu, you'll always taste the season's brightest flavors.

SAVOR THE MOMENT: RELAX & REJOICE

Start your Sunday morning with gospel brunch at **Halls Chophouse** where a small gospel choir invites guests to experience the history and culture of Charleston while indulging in classic Southern dishes.

Spend your afternoon at **Gingerline** and enjoy patio views of the City Market and a winter cocktail like the pomegranate mimosa.

End an unforgettable weekend with sunset views at **Islander 71** as you sip on festive cocktails and enjoy fresh seafood such as crab cakes and local oysters.

CHARLESTON

South Carolina



YOUR HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS.

Some call it hospitality, we call it the endless welcome. Discover the charm of the Charleston area this holiday season, where history comes alive and southern hospitality awaits. Immerse yourself in a place that both recharges and inspires. There's never been a better time to visit. *The perfect stay awaits.*

Explore *Charleston* CHRISTMASINCHARLESTON.COM | @EXPLORECHARLESTON





What to give your new partner's mom? The brother-in-law you see only during the holidays? Quality crowd-pleasing presents like this hot pot starter set from chili crisp titan **Fly By Jing** are festive, fun, and one way to lock in your next dinner invite. Read more on page 26.

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Win Over*

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◆
**YESFOLK
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This upstate New York company's 750-ml craft kombuchas hold their own on any home bar cart. We love Inflorescence, a fruity combination of green tea, white tea, bougainvillea, and sumac, aged in American oak barrels. \$23; yesfolktonics.com



◆
NAMA M1 PLANT-BASED MILK MAKER

This newly released milk maker rocketed to the top of our wish lists for its ability to elegantly transform nuts and oats into creamy milks. \$400; namawell.com



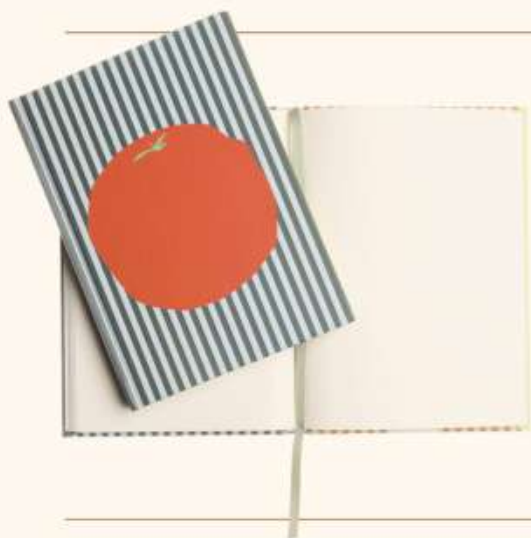
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It's always summer with this journal made by premium stationery brand Papier. Its 96 blank pages are ready to fill with recipes, grocery lists, or meal-prep planning. \$40; shop.bonappetit.com



SIR/MADAM BAKER'S DOZEN WOODEN SPOONS

Each set of these beechwood spoons is hand-carved into various shapes and sizes, ready to tackle baking projects, rustic stews, and more. From \$120; hawkinsnewyork.com



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A handy five-inch ultrasharp stainless-steel blade is ideal for the on-the-go cook who can't Airbnb without a good knife. It clicks into place with a grooved ergonomic handle. \$280; miltonmadeknives.com

✦ *FOR THE FAMILY YOU WANT TO WIN OVER* ✦



FLY BY JING HOT POT STARTER SET

Bring the hot pot party home with an electric pot with heat-safe handles and a spicy soup base to kick off the meal. \$130; flybyjing.com



KEEKI BREAD BAG

This beeswax-lined linen bag is large enough to fit a farmers market boule inside—where it'll stay fresher for longer. \$25; keeki.com



TOUCHY COFFEE COFFEE TIME SUBSCRIPTION

Each bag of beans is sourced from eco-friendly small farmers around the world. \$42 per delivery; touchycoffee.com

The Meal Plan

Juicy baked chicken meatballs with tahini-coated green beans, lemony seafood pantry pasta, and more

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRAVIS RAINEY

BEEF AND BARLEY STEW

Cutting the beef into cubes and searing before cooking them through in broth helps to make this comforting stew quicker than—but just as delicious as—the traditional slower-cooked version.

RECIPE BY JESSE SZEWCZYK

4 SERVINGS

- 1 Tbsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¾ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
- 1 tsp. freshly ground pepper, plus more
- 1½ lb. beef stew meat (such as boneless chuck), cut into ¼" cubes
- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 large red onion, finely chopped, plus more thinly sliced for serving
- 3 medium carrots, peeled, cut into ¼"-thick rounds
- 2 medium celery stalks, finely chopped
- 8 garlic cloves, finely grated
- ¼ cup double-concentrated tomato paste
- 4 cups low-sodium beef broth
- 1 cup pearl barley
- 2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- Parsley leaves with tender stems (for serving)

1. Sprinkle 1 Tbsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¾ tsp. Morton kosher salt and 1 tsp. pepper all over meat. Heat oil in a medium Dutch oven or other heavy pot over high. Arrange meat in a single layer (it will be packed tight) and cook, stirring once or twice, until deeply browned in spots, 7–9 minutes.

2. Add chopped onion, carrots, and celery and cook, stirring often, until starting to soften and brown slightly, 5–7 minutes. Add garlic and tomato paste; cook, stirring often, until vegetables are evenly coated in paste, about 2 minutes. Add broth, barley, Worcestershire sauce, and 4 cups water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium, and simmer briskly, stirring often to prevent burning and adding more water as needed if liquid is reducing too quickly (it should be brothy and stew-like), until meat and barley are tender, 45–60 minutes. Taste stew; season with more salt and pepper if needed.

3. Ladle stew among bowls and top with parsley and sliced red onion.

DO AHEAD: Stew (without parsley and sliced red onion) can be made 3 days ahead. Let cool; cover and chill.





CHICKEN MEATBALLS WITH SESAME GREEN BEANS

Baking chicken meatballs and fresh green beans on the same baking sheet streamlines the cooking process. Coating the former in a sticky soy glaze and the latter in a savory tahini dressing turns both into something special.

RECIPE BY KENDRA VACULIN

4 SERVINGS

- 3 scallions
- 1 large egg
- 2 garlic cloves, finely grated
- ½ cup panko
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, plus more
- 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
- 1 (heaping) Tbsp. tahini
- 1 tsp. miso
- 1 tsp. plus ⅔ cup plus 1 Tbsp. unseasoned rice vinegar
- 5 Tbsp. sugar, plus more
- 1 lb. green beans, trimmed
- 1 lb. ground chicken
- ⅓ cup soy sauce
- Sesame seeds and steamed rice (for serving)

1. Preheat oven to 450°. Remove dark green tops from scallions and thinly slice; set aside for serving. Finely chop remaining white and pale green parts; transfer to a large bowl. Add egg, garlic, panko, red pepper flakes, 2 Tbsp. oil, and 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt; mix to combine. Let sit 5 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, whisk tahini, miso, 1 tsp. vinegar, a pinch of sugar, and 2 Tbsp. water in a large bowl to combine. Set tahini dressing aside.

3. Place green beans on a rimmed baking sheet; drizzle with some oil, season with salt, and toss to coat.

4. Add chicken to bowl with scallion mixture and mix



gently to combine. Using oiled hands, scoop out about 2 Tbsp. portions and roll into golf-ball-size meatballs. Place on baking sheet with green beans.

5. Bake, turning meatballs once, until green beans are tender and meatballs are cooked through (they will still be very pale), 13–17 minutes.

6. Meanwhile, whisk soy sauce, ⅔ cup vinegar,

and remaining 5 Tbsp. sugar in a cold small saucepan to dissolve sugar. Set over medium-high heat and cook, whisking occasionally to keep from sticking to sides, until thick and syrupy, 11–13 minutes. Remove from heat; whisk in remaining 1 Tbsp. vinegar.

7. Transfer meatballs to a large bowl. Pour soy glaze over and toss to coat. Glaze will thicken as it cools, so toss periodically

to build up coats of glaze on meatballs until ready to serve.

8. Transfer green beans to bowl with reserved tahini dressing; add sesame seeds as desired and toss to coat.

9. Divide rice among shallow bowls or plates and top with meatballs and green beans. Spoon any soy glaze remaining in bowl over. Top with reserved dark green scallion tops.



**NOTHING WILL STICK BUT
THE SMILES ON THEIR FACES.**



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SCAN FOR
TIPS & RECIPES

LEMON-CHILE CALAMARI PASTA

This dish comes together in a flash with the help of kitchen staples that never go out of season, like lemon, garlic, Calabrian chile paste, and butter. It's also a great introduction to cooking squid at home, which gently poaches right in the sauce. The result is a pasta that's bright and sunny without being overly fishy.

RECIPE BY KENDRA VACULIN

4 SERVINGS

- 8–10 oz. dried pappardelle or tagliatelle or 12 oz. dried bucatini or spaghetti
- 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
- 2 lemons
- 4 garlic cloves
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 lb. cleaned squid, bodies sliced ¼" thick, tentacles left whole
- 5 Tbsp. unsalted butter, divided
- 1 Tbsp. Calabrian chile paste
Freshly ground pepper
Torn basil (for serving)

1. Cook pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water, stirring occasionally, until al dente. Drain, reserving 1½ cups pasta cooking liquid.

2. Meanwhile, finely grate the zest of 1 lemon into a small bowl, then finely grate in garlic. Cut both lemons in half and squeeze juice into a measuring glass to make ¼ cup; discard spent lemons.

3. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Cook lemon zest and garlic, stirring, until fragrant and starting to stick to pan, about 30 seconds. Add half of lemon juice and cook, stirring often, until reduced slightly, about 1 minute.

4. Add squid, 2 Tbsp. butter, 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, and ½ cup reserved pasta cooking liquid; cook, stirring often, until butter is melted and squid

are partially cooked, about 2 minutes. Add pasta, chile paste, ½ cup pasta cooking liquid, and remaining 3 Tbsp. butter; season with pepper. Cook, tossing often and adding

more pasta cooking liquid a little at a time as needed, until butter is melted, sauce is thickened and coats pasta, and squid are just cooked through (they should look white and

opaque), 2–3 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in lots of basil and remaining lemon juice.

5. Divide pasta among bowls; season with more pepper.





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MUSHROOMS AU POIVRE

Earthy, umami-rich fungi are ideal for cooking like meat: searing, tossing in butter, and serving alongside a robust pan sauce. Here, mixed mushrooms get the au poivre treatment—cooked until golden and crisp and served with a zingy peppercorn sauce alongside fresh greens.

RECIPE BY JESSE SZEWCZYK

4 SERVINGS

- 2 Tbsp. black peppercorns
- 2 lb. mixed mushrooms (such as crimini, maitake, and/or king trumpet), halved, torn into 1" pieces if large
- ¼ cup plus 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil; plus more for drizzling
- 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
- 5 sprigs thyme
- 4 garlic cloves, smashed
- 8 Tbsp. unsalted butter, divided
- 1 large shallot, finely chopped
- 1½ cups cognac, dry sherry, brandy, or low-sodium vegetable broth
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 1 Tbsp. soy sauce
- ½ tsp. balsamic vinegar
- Freshly ground pepper
- Thinly sliced chives (optional), mixed greens, fresh lemon juice, and country-style bread (for serving)



1. Place peppercorns on a cutting board or seal in a resealable plastic bag and coarsely crush with a large stainless-steel skillet or heavy pot. (Or, coarsely chop with a knife. They should be a lot coarser than what you would typically season with.)

2. Toss mushrooms, ¼ cup oil, 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, and 2 tsp. crushed peppercorns in a large bowl to combine.

3. Heat 2 Tbsp. oil in a medium cast-iron skillet over medium-high. Add half of mushrooms; top with a steak

weight, small cast-iron skillet, or small heavy saucepan or pot. Cook until mushrooms release their juices and they are simmering, 5–7 minutes. Remove weight and cook until liquid is evaporated, about 3 minutes. Turn mushrooms over the best you can (you might have some broken pieces) and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, about 4 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a plate. Repeat process with remaining mushrooms.

4. Return all mushrooms to pan and reserve plate. Add thyme

sprigs, garlic, and 5 Tbsp. butter to mushrooms and cook, stirring often, until mushrooms are deeply browned and garlic and thyme are fragrant, about 4 minutes. Transfer mushrooms to reserved plate with slotted spoon.

5. Add shallot and remaining crushed peppercorns to fat in pan; cook, stirring constantly, until shallot is softened, about 3 minutes. Remove pan from heat and carefully pour in cognac. Return to heat and cook, stirring occasionally, until reduced by half, about 4 minutes. Add cream, soy

sauce, and vinegar; cook until sauce is thick enough to lightly coat a spoon, about 3 minutes. Add remaining 3 Tbsp. butter; stir until melted and emulsified.

6. Remove pan from heat; season sauce with more salt and ground pepper if needed. (It should taste strongly of pepper.) Return mushrooms to pan; top with chives if desired.

7. Place greens in a large bowl. Lightly drizzle with oil and lemon juice, season with salt and pepper, and toss to coat. Serve mushrooms with salad and bread alongside.



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Crack On

This supersized crème brûlée will elicit an instant round of applause

BY NINA MOSKOWITZ ■ PHOTOGRAPH BY AARON BARTON

COLOSSAL CRÈME BRÛLÉE

6-8 SERVINGS

This oversized crème brûlée isn't just an impressive centerpiece dessert. It is actually far easier to make than individual ones requiring ramekins that see light once a year and can waterlog during the baking process. The large format also makes it harder to overbake, ensuring a luscious silky custard heady with floral vanilla. The signature crackly amber topping is created from sugar caramelized with a blowtorch. Do yourself a favor and invest in one if you haven't already (see sidebar below).

- 3 cups heavy cream
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plus 3 Tbsp. (188 g) granulated sugar
- 8 large egg yolks
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. Diamond Crystal or $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. Morton kosher salt

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:

A blowtorch or kitchen torch

Place a rack in middle of oven and preheat to 325°. Bring a large saucepan of water to a boil (this is for the water bath). Set a 2-qt. ceramic or glass baking dish or metal baking pan (an 8" round or square works well) inside a 13x9" baking dish or large roasting pan. Heat cream, vanilla bean paste, and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) sugar in a medium saucepan over medium, stirring often with a wooden spoon, just until sugar is dissolved, about 5 minutes.

Lightly whisk egg yolks and salt in a medium bowl just to break up yolks. Stream in cream mixture, whisking constantly until combined. Strain custard through a fine-mesh sieve into 8" dish. If there are a lot of air bubbles, pop with a chopstick or skewer.

Pour boiling water into 13x9" baking dish to come

halfway up sides of 8" dish; carefully transfer to oven. Bake custard until edges are set but a 3"-4" circle in the center still wobbles slightly (like Jell-O; custard will continue to set after baking), 35-40 minutes; if your 8" pan is metal, start checking sooner as the baking time will be shorter. Immediately remove custard from water bath (be careful not to get water in it) and chill until firm, at least 4 hours.

Sprinkle custard evenly with remaining 3 Tbsp. (38 g) sugar; heat with torch, moving in a circular pattern, until sugar is melted and a deep amber color. (You want a thin, smooth crust that shatters when broken.) Serve immediately or chill up to 30 minutes.

DO AHEAD: Custard can be baked 3 days ahead. Cover and keep chilled. Just before serving, gently blot any condensation from surface with a paper towel and brûlée.

YOU NEED A TORCH

A blowtorch guarantees your crème brûlée has an even layer of ready-to-shatter caramelized sugar on top. Also, it won't curdle your delicate custard like a broiler might. (Trust us, we tried.) Our favorite is the **Jo Chef Superior RX Butane Torch** (\$35; amazon.com), which has a built-in safety lock, visible fuel gauge, and easily adjustable flame size. Use it to melt cheese over French onion soup, toast meringue-topped pies and baked Alaskas, or light birthday candles with a little extra flair.

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(paste, \$27 for a 2.29-oz. jar, or extract, \$25 for a 1.69-oz. bottle; heilalavanilla.com) is made from sustainably sourced beans from a network of small producers in Tonga. Just a $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of the double-concentrated paste or extract equals the flavor and seeds of one whole vanilla bean.







When I was expecting my first child, I'd hear other soon-to-be mothers rightly quip about the pains and pangs of pregnancy, and I'd empathize as best as I could. But that practice was challenged by a personal truth: I loved being pregnant. None of the food aversions, morning sickness, or near-lethal levels of fatigue I experienced was a match for the bliss I received from the bump.

This gave me the naive assumption that an uneventful gestation would be followed by an equally undramatic delivery. It wasn't. After a harrowing 52-hour labor that ended in an emergency C-section, I could barely process what had just happened to me, my husband, Joseph, and our blessedly perfect baby boy, Luke. I also didn't have the relational courage to ask for help.

At the time we were newcomers living in upstate New York for work, and Albany seemed inhospitable for two people who were raised in the Caribbean and longed for warmth in all forms. We tried and, on some level, succeeded in finding friendships, a few of which

persist to this day. However, at the time, despite our efforts, the harsh reality was that even our burgeoning connections mirrored a city that was unfamiliar, distant, and cold.

All this was until a bag of cherries broke through the ice.

A week after I had Luke in late May, a very new friend, Casey, politely asked if it would be okay for her to pop over for a quick hello. I tentatively agreed because I was still recovering. She brought over a bouquet of flowers, a six-pack of

Magic Hat beer, a fresh baguette, and three pounds of sweet cherries. The beer languished in the back of our refrigerator for months. Joseph ate the bread with a salted soft-boiled egg. But the cherries—red, ripe, raw—were a new mother's unexpected reward, and to this day the most memorable push present I've ever received.

Casey said that fruit was an afterthought. Yet it afforded me a spectral perspective of the hidden joys found in accepting help, even when—perhaps

especially when—it's offered by a new friend. Casey stayed at our apartment for less than 20 minutes, the perfect hi/bye. But the care that hugged me each time I plucked a cherry from its stem, rolled the juicy orb in my mouth, and bit the meat off its seed, was long-lasting. I ate almost all of those cherries in one sitting, feeling satisfied, seen, and supported.

For the next couple of months I hungered only for more fruit, the way I did as a child and teen growing up in Trinidad and Tobago. But finding fresh tropical fruit in upstate New York was a stretch assignment. There was no tree-ripened guava, pommerac, or Julie mango for me to hand-pick, as I typically would on my island. So I instead settled for other imported equivalents that bridged the gap: pineapples, off-ripe mangoes, and kiwis. Even though some of the fruit tasted flat and lacked the

The Fourth Trimester is a series where parents share the meals that nourished them postpartum. For more, head to bonappetit.com/fourth-trimester.

Cherries on Top

After a difficult labor, a surprise gift from a new friend helped me heal

BY BRIGID WASHINGTON
ILLUSTRATION BY DROR COHEN
PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAVIS RAINEY

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floral perfume of anything homegrown, I was determined to help make the ingredients sing.

After adding some bright accompaniments—a heavy dash of Angostura bitters, a couple shakes of nutmeg and Tajín, a drizzle of honey, a pinch of salt—the tired fruit roused. Lacquered in an orangey botanical syrup, even out-of-season produce embodied lushness and abundance, something I didn't yet feel but knew I would again. Tajín imparted a barely-there citrusy smokiness, and the nutmeg brought a hint of earthy nuttiness. This was exactly the snack that my nursing body needed and my depleted psyche craved—easy, healthy, and invigorating.

It tasted like my old home and my new one, all at once.

No matter how it starts, motherhood is an emotional and physical test. And often the conditioning for the role arrives not in the quality of care given, but rather how that care is received. It didn't matter that Casey brought a hodgepodge of groceries, or that she didn't know I couldn't drink beer. What soothed me most was the value of the thought.

There are times that I toy with the idea of pitting fresh cherries and mixing them into the fruit salad, and each time I choose to incorporate some type of berry instead. I leave the cherries whole, remembering Casey's improbable gesture that repaired so many of the rips during delivery and sleepless postpartum days. It's an awesome thing to observe yourself heal, particularly when the balm is bright and delicious and comes from an unexpected place. ♦



BRIGID WASHINGTON

is a journalist, cookbook author, and proud dual citizen. Her memoir, *Made to Cook*, is forthcoming in 2025.



HONEY AND BITTERS FRUIT SALAD

4-6 SERVINGS

- ¼ cup honey
- 2 tsp. Angostura bitters
- 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt
- ½ tsp. ground or freshly grated nutmeg

- 1 tsp. Tajín Clásico seasoning; plus more for serving (optional)
- 6-7 cups 1" pieces mixed fresh fruit (such as berries, stone fruit, melons, mangoes, kiwi, and/or pineapple; peeled if needed)

Mix honey, bitters, salt, nutmeg, and 1 tsp. Tajín seasoning in a small bowl to combine.

Place fruit in a large bowl and add 2 Tbsp. honey mixture. Toss gently to coat. Let sit 10 minutes.

To serve, taste fruit salad and add more honey mixture if needed. Toss gently, then sprinkle with more Tajín seasoning if desired.

DO AHEAD: Salad (without Tajín topping) can be made 12 hours ahead; cover and chill. Toss before proceeding.

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Since printing our first issue in 1956, *Bon Appétit* has published tens of thousands of recipes. It would take literal decades to cook them all. So our editors combed our humongous archive and curated the 56 recipes you must make this year, from upgraded sloppy joes to rightfully famous cookies. You can find the full list on our website by scanning the QR code at right, and we'll be highlighting a staff favorite each month in print. Let's cook.



CREAMY CAULIFLOWER SOUP

WHY WE LOVE IT

If I had to choose one type of dish to make for the rest of my life, it would be soup. It's the perfect one-pot meal that can be as complex as spicy laksa or as comfortingly simple as a vegetable purée. Christina Chaey's Creamy Cauliflower Soup With Cheesy Mustard Croutons falls in the latter camp. It starts with humble, full-of-potential cauliflower, which you'll gently simmer with garlic, onion, and a generous pour of half-and-half. While the soup bubbles away, scatter shredded Gruyère over mustard-slicked cubes of bread and bake them into croutons. A blender quickly transforms the cauliflower into a velvety purée before you add the final flourishes: floral pepper and a squeeze of lemon. The result is a monochromatic bowl with unexpected oomph. —Urmila Ramakrishnan

4 SERVINGS

- 3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus more for drizzling
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¾ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 large head of cauliflower (2½–3 lb.), florets broken into small pieces, core chopped
- ¼ tsp. freshly ground pepper, plus more
- ¾ cup half-and-half
- 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 5 cups 1" cubes country-style bread, preferably day-old
- ½ cup finely grated Gruyère or cheddar
- 1½ Tbsp. fresh lemon juice

Place a rack in middle of oven; preheat to 350°. Heat 2 Tbsp. oil in a large saucepan over medium-low. Add onion and season with salt. Cook, stirring occasionally and reducing heat if onion is starting to brown, until softened, 5–7 minutes. Add garlic and cook,

stirring, until softened, about 2 minutes. Add cauliflower, 1½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¾ tsp. Morton kosher salt, ¼ tsp. pepper, and 5½ cups water (it should barely cover cauliflower). Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer until cauliflower is starting to fall apart, 15–20 minutes. Stir in half-and-half and simmer 5 minutes. Remove pot from heat.

Meanwhile, whisk mustard, butter, and 1 Tbsp. oil in a medium bowl; season with salt and pepper. Add bread; toss to coat. Scatter cheese over and toss again. Arrange on a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet and bake, turning once, until cheese is melted and croutons are golden brown and crisp, 10–15 minutes.

Working in batches, carefully purée soup in a blender until very smooth, transferring to a medium bowl as you go. Return soup to pot and reheat over medium-low, stirring and adding water to thin if needed. Stir in lemon juice and season with more salt if needed. Ladle soup into bowls. Top with croutons, drizzle with oil, and season with pepper.

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Best Buds

A jar of tiny, mighty capers, brine and all, is good down to the last drop

BY KENDRA VACULIN ■ PHOTOGRAPHS BY AARON BARTON

Capers are like flattery—a little goes a long way. These pops of brine, moody in color and assertive in flavor, more than carry their weight; often, a tablespoon is enough to enliven a dish. You know their power if you've added a sprinkle to a bagel with lox, scattered some over a niçoise salad, or used them to fortify a pasta puttanesca. Though petite in size, the pantry stalwart makes a big impression on anything savory needing a hit of lemony tang.

Technically, capers are the flower buds of the *Capparis spinosa* plant, a prickly shrub commonly found bordering the Mediterranean, in places like Morocco and Greece. The smallest variety is nonpareil, meaning “without peer” in French and available in most grocery stores. Sold packed in salt or submerged in a vinegar solution, they're tart and potent, like teeny, supercharged olives. (Not to be confused with caper berries, the larger, unripe fruit of

the same plant, which you'll often see still on the stem.)

At home, pat your capers dry (rinse first, if salted), then crisp them in a splash of oil to create a textural topping for roasted vegetables or a bowl of soup. Or finely chop and stir them into a creamy dressing like a Caesar for a vegetarian-friendly alternative to anchovies.

Don't forget the brine from the jar. Use it to marinate chicken, which stays tender and juicy beneath a pan sauce made from

whole capers and butter. You'll find that quick company-worthy recipe on the next page; it's so winning that it may turn your dinner guests into caper converts too.



KENDRA'S TIP

Buy the big jar. Ditching the narrow-necked bottles will let you easily fish out your bounty with a spoon.



continues on page 48 ►

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AWAY FOR THE HOLIDAYS

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THE SEASON MAY BE WARM AT HEART, but in many parts of the country this time of year, baby, it's cold outside. Make your spirits brighter by trading the white snow for sugary white sand along the beaches of St. Pete-Clearwater, Florida. With year-round sunshine and serene emerald waters, it's the ideal destination to visit in winter.

Daily nonstop flights from multiple cities to this Gulf Coast locale make it as easy to get to as it is to stay. Known for America's best beaches, the region offers epic ways to seize your holiday under the sun.

When nighttime settles in, see the light displays—the only way Florida knows



how—on the water. At the holiday boat parades, vessels from canoes to yachts deck their hulls in lights for a sparkling sight from St. Pete Pier, along John's Pass, or on the southern shores of St. Pete Beach. For more holiday dazzle, stroll through glimmering North Straub Park, Station Square Park, and the Florida Botanical Gardens, which boasts more than 1 million LED lights.

'Tis the time of year for merrymaking, and resorts around town overflow with spirited experiences. The historic Vinoy Resort & Golf Club in St. Pete serves up high tea with a Nutcracker-themed twist. At the beach, the JW Marriott Clearwater Beach Resort and Spa turns their lobby into a gingerbread village and features seasonal sips like Apple & Cinnamon Spice Sangria to accompany their holiday menu. To get your party started, recreate this sweet and spiced seasonal staple-to-be.

You need:

750 ml red wine
4 oz apple syrup
3 cinnamon sticks
½ cup orange juice
½ cup brandy

Instructions:

In a pitcher, combine red wine, apple syrup, orange juice, and brandy. Add cinnamon sticks and stir well. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours (up to overnight). Pour into glasses over ice, and garnish with sliced apples or oranges if desired. The longer it sits, the richer the flavor, making it a guaranteed holiday gathering hit.

Cheers to starting a new holiday tradition in St. Pete-Clearwater.



Apple & Cinnamon Spice Sangria



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BACK-POCKET CAPER-BUTTER CHICKEN

4 SERVINGS

A simple marinade made with bright caper brine becomes the sauce, with melted butter giving it a velvety texture and whole capers adding pops of tang.

- 1 garlic clove, finely grated
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. drained capers, plus 2 Tbsp. brine

- 4 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 large skinless, boneless chicken breasts (about 1 lb. total)
- 1 tsp. honey
- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter, cut into pieces
- Freshly ground pepper
- Coarsely chopped parsley (for serving)

Mix garlic, vinegar, caper brine, and 2 Tbsp. oil in a large bowl to combine. Slice

chicken breasts in half like you're going to butterfly them, but cut all the way through to make 4 evenly thick cutlets ($\frac{1}{3}$ " thick or less).

Add to bowl with marinade and turn to coat. Let sit at least 15 minutes and up to 1 hour.

Heat remaining 2 Tbsp. oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Remove chicken from marinade; pat dry (no need to salt). Set marinade aside. Arrange chicken in pan; cook until golden, about 3 minutes.

Turn and cook on other side until golden and cooked through, about 2 minutes. Transfer chicken to a platter; reserve skillet.

Stir honey and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water into reserved marinade, then pour into reserved skillet. Cook, scraping up brown bits, 1 minute. Add butter and capers; season with pepper. Cook, stirring, until butter is melted and sauce is emulsified, 1–2 minutes. Drizzle sauce over chicken; top with parsley.



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TWO-BITE DELIGHTS

Simple and elegant canapés start in the freezer

BY HANA ASBRINK • PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRAVIS RAINEY

Let it be known, you don't need to throw a big bash to raise a glass and celebrate all that's been good in 2024. My favorite gatherings are impromptu, intimate, and downright low lift. Sometimes I'm in the mood to host but don't want to deal with a multicourse menu or a last-minute grocery run. So I make simple two-bite canapés, born out of fuss-free staples that I keep stocked in my freezer.

First up: a package of puff pastry (my preference is an all-butter dough, like Dufour) that I defrost right on the kitchen counter. This ready-made puff makes a beautiful canvas for both sweet and savory treats—like Cheesy Green Curry Palmiers that are the perfect salty partner to a holiday tipple.

I'm not above a mini frank either, so you'll likely find a package or two of cocktail wieners

or little chorizos next to the dough. I eat them as a snack, cooked up, on their own; add them to bento boxes and banchan spreads; or, my favorite, roll them into Chicago-style pigs in a blanket (the best party snack, full stop) with a sprinkling of poppy seeds and celery salt, plus an adorable cornichon.

And tucked in the very back of my freezer, you'll always see a bag of frozen cooked shrimp. Once they're thawed, I chop them up and mix them into a gochujang-spiced mayo, which recalls the taste of your go-to sushi roll. But instead of serving the shrimp salad over rice, I spoon it onto a crunchy leaf of ever-so-slightly-bitter endive—a vegetable built for snacking—and shower the whole thing with festive furikake.

With apps as simple as these, you can be a guest at your own party.

CHICAGO-STYLE PIGS IN A BLANKET

Tear dough from an **8-oz. can refrigerated crescent rolls** along perforations to separate into 8 triangles. Working one at a time and starting from the point end, make two lengthwise cuts on each triangle to make 3 roughly equal-size triangles (you should have 24 total). Spread a thin layer of **yellow mustard** over each one, then lightly sprinkle with **celery salt** (you don't need much; it's salty). Place a **cornichon (from 24 total)** and a sausage from **one 10-oz. package smoked cocktail sausages or franks** on wide end of a triangle and carefully and tightly roll up; gently press point end to seal. Repeat with all triangles. Beat **1 large egg** in a small bowl and brush over dough; sprinkle with **poppy seeds** and lightly with more celery salt. Divide pigs in a blanket between 2 parchment-lined baking sheets; bake in a 375° oven until rolls are golden brown and cooked through, 15–18 minutes. Transfer to a platter; serve with **Chicago-style relish** and more mustard for dipping. **8 servings**







SPICY SHRIMP ENDIVE SPEARS

Mix **¼ cup mayonnaise** (preferably Kewpie), **1 Tbsp. gochujang** (Korean hot pepper paste), **¼ tsp. toasted sesame oil**, and a **pinch of kosher salt** in a medium bowl to combine. Thoroughly pat shrimp from **one 12-oz. bag frozen cooked peeled and tail-off shrimp, thawed**, dry with a kitchen towel or paper towels.

Cut shrimp into **¼"** pieces and add to bowl with mayonnaise sauce along with **1 scallion, thinly sliced**.

Mix well to coat, then cover shrimp salad and chill at least 30 minutes and up to 1 hour.

Uncover shrimp salad and stir well to recombine. Separate spears from **2 large heads of endive**. Place a small spoonful of shrimp salad on each spear and arrange on a platter; sprinkle with **furikake**. **6–8 servings**



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CHEESY GREEN CURRY PALMIERS

Mix **3 oz. sharp cheddar, preferably white, coarsely grated (about ¾ cup), 2 Tbsp. mayonnaise, and 1 Tbsp. green curry paste** in a small bowl until combined and spreadable (double if you want to bake off 2 sheets of puff pastry). Roll out **1 sheet frozen puff pastry (one 14-oz. package or half of a 17.3-oz. package), thawed**, on a surface lightly dusted with **all-purpose flour** just to smooth out. Spread cheese mixture evenly over pastry to cover (it will be thick). Fold both long sides up and over filling toward the center so the edges meet in the middle (do not overlap); press down gently to flatten. Fold sides you just folded toward the center again to form a double-folded log with a seam running down the middle. Squeeze all along length of log to adhere. If the dough feels too soft, wrap in plastic and chill until firm, 15–20 minutes. Using a sharp knife or pastry cutter, trim ends as needed to tidy, then slice log crosswise ½" thick to make 15–16 pieces. Lay flat on a parchment-lined baking sheet, spacing about 2" apart, and bake palmiers in a 400° oven 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350° and continue to bake palmiers until puffed and golden all over, 12–15 minutes longer. Let palmiers cool slightly, then transfer to a platter. 6–8 servings

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JONAH ROSENBERG, PROP-STYLING BY EMMA RINGNESS

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The Fantastical Land of Doughnuts

From textbook styles like yeast and cake to new-wave mochi doughnuts, local expert **Zoe Baillargeon** chronicles eight must-visit shops in Portland, OR

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GILBERT TERRAZAS

It seems fitting that the hometown of *The Simpsons* creator Matt Groening is best known for Homer Simpson's favorite food: the irresistible doughnut.

While neighborhood mom-and-pop shops have been satisfying city doughnut hounds since the 1980s, it was Voodoo Doughnut's pink boxes and left field flavors—such as the much-mythologized and since-discontinued NyQuil doughnut—that made Portland a doughnut destination in the early aughts. At Voodoo, the doughnut was reimagined as a canvas for experimentation. These “nonconformist doughnuts,” as Anthony Bourdain once called them, struck a chord in this capital of all things quirky and have been a recognizable culinary marker ever since.

Today, there's a variety of doughnut shops and styles, with innovative entrants like springy mochi ones that pay tribute to Portland's diverse food culture. The city's eight best include made-to-order minis, vegan doughnuts that rival the best milk-and-egg-based options, and fluffy brioche with inspired flavors.



FROM TOP CLOCKWISE:
*The Doe Donut, the Coconut Sweet Corn
Donut, and the Cannoli Donut.*

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PIP'S ORIGINAL DOUGHNUTS & CHAI

4759 NE Fremont St.

Don't be surprised by a line outside this cozy two-room shop. You'll appreciate why as soon as you pop one of these bite-size doughnuts. Husband-wife duo Nate and Jamie Snell opened Pip's in 2013, featuring made-to-order, state-fair-style cake doughnuts, fried hot and fast for a slightly crunchy exterior and chewy interior.

The Candied Bacon Maple is a personal favorite, with a sugary, chewy center of maple-syrup-candied bacon bits and a dusting of powdered sugar. Order an assorted dozen and wash them down with Pip's chai flight, featuring house-made specialties such as the Smokey Robinson (cocoa, cinnamon, and clove) and the zesty Ginger Rogers (spicy ginger and sun-dried Thai chili).

BLUE STAR DONUTS

Multiple locations

With inventive flavors and high-quality dough, Blue Star is a serious contender for Portland's fanciest doughnuts. Since 2012, it has rapidly expanded to multiple locations around the city. At each outpost the doughnuts stand out in neat shapes, varied textures, and beautiful colors.

The signature brioche dough, courtesy of an 18-hour production process, results in a soft and airy doughnut used for styles that include thick fritters and ones filled with flavors like passion fruit-cacao nib and chocolate-almond ganache. Choose up to 12 donuts for the full Blue Star experience and wash them down with a refreshing iced matcha or a nitro cold brew, a collaboration with local Coava Coffee Roasters.

MIKIKO MOCHI DONUTS

300 NE 28th Ave.

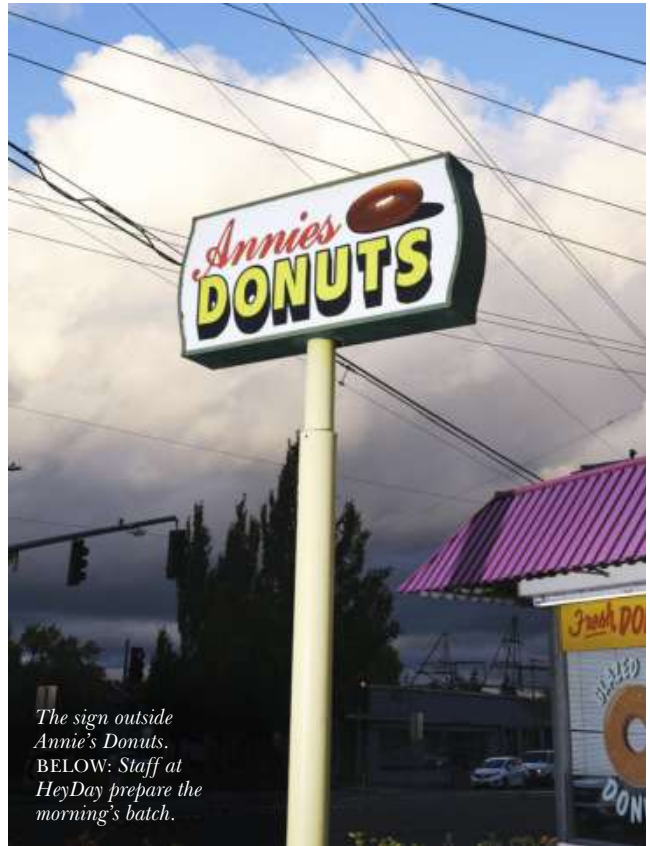
Mochi doughnuts are all the rage in Portland, and Mikiko was at the forefront of this wave. Inspired by her family's mochi-tsuki mochi-making traditions, Emily Mikiko Strocher and her partner, Alex McGillivray, started Mikiko as a pop-up in 2020, with success leading to a sun-filled brick-and-mortar in 2022. Unlike most mochi doughnuts (small dough balls attached like

a string of pearls), Mikiko's take the classic doughnut form and are baked as opposed to fried to maintain a light and fluffy texture. They're chewy and springy, with a tingly crackle in your mouth. New flavors are released often with a heavy focus on Asian ingredients such as matcha, ube, and Thai tea. Order the doughnut flight, featuring assorted flavors and styles, and don't skip the ham, egg, and American cheese sandwiched between two unglazed doughnuts.

DOE DONUTS + ICE CREAM

4110 NE Sandy Blvd.

Since 2017, Doe has been satisfying vegan sweet teeth with its entirely plant-based offerings. The light, fluffy, and flavorful creations from Carly Sitner and Crystal Wegener are must-tries for doughnut fans, vegan or not. Noteworthy flavors include the Portland Fog, featuring an Earl Grey glaze and fluffy whipped cream—an ode to Rose City's famous overcast



The sign outside Annie's Donuts. BELOW: Staff at HeyDay prepare the morning's batch.



weather. Pay tribute to Portland by ordering the Doe Donut, à la Homer Simpson, covered in pink strawberry glaze and multicolored sprinkles. When it's in season, order the Everything Donut, a bagel-doughnut hybrid filled with vegan cream cheese and showered with everything bagel seasoning and fresh chives.

COCO DONUTS

Multiple locations

Coco Donuts is focused on the classics, with seven locations featuring no-frills, no wild flavors, just good doughnuts served with a healthy dose of nostalgia and comfort.

As with any old-school doughnut establishment, Coco has all the essentials: simple raised and glazed, chewy old-fashioned, and so on in flavors that include rich chocolate, delicate lavender, and filled Bavarian cream, all paired with outstanding coffee made with house-roasted beans.

HEYDAY

3612 SE 82nd Ave.

Another favorite of rice-flour-doughnut fans, HeyDay started in May 2020 as a pop-up before securing a home base at the Collective Oregon Eateries Food Hall in 2023.

Owner Lisa Nguyen's wheat and rice flour creations—reminiscent of mochi doughnuts in texture and shape—are both an homage to the traditional Japanese sweet treat and a tribute to the flavors of her Vietnamese culture. Offerings change weekly and seasonally with flavors like Vietnamese coffee, fruity ube, and black sesame, while drinks include an iced pandan latte to wash down your treats.

ANNIE'S DONUTS

3449 NE 72nd Ave.

An OG on the city's doughnut circuit, since 1988 Annie's has been a go-to long before places like Voodoo came on the scene. The interior is a nostalgia-drenched, vintage vision of sunshine yellow molded plastic booths, lime green walls, and a glass doughnut case.

Made fresh each morning, a full lineup of tried-and-true favorites fills this case: hand-size classic yeast doughnuts; dense, jelly-filled; spiraling twists; maple bars; and old-fashioned



The sugar, strawberry sprinkle, matcha, and lavender donuts at Coco Donuts.

cake doughnuts that glisten with glaze. The devil's food cake doughnut is a nonnegotiable order. Enjoy them with a cold glass of milk or a straightforward cup of black coffee.

DELICIOUS DONUTS

12 SE Grand Ave.

This eclectic family-owned spot, featuring specialties like a popular peanut-maple cake doughnut and classics with simple glazes and bright sprinkles, has been a Portland staple since 2005. With generous toppings (think Oreo crumbles with ribbons of peanut butter), large

doughnuts, and a diverse mix of shapes and styles, Delicious will never go out of fashion.

Order 24 hours in advance and you can customize your doughnut with frostings like clear glaze and chocolate, fillings like Bavarian cream or raspberry, and toppings like rainbow sprinkles.

A breakfast menu features French toast made with glazed doughnuts and a doughnut breakfast sandwich stacked with a folded egg, two sausage patties, and slices of ham and cheese for a sweet-savory start to the day.

PORTLAND DOUGHNUT DNA

Doughnuts largely fit into two categories: yeast-raised and cake. The yeast-raised, which you'll find glazed and stuffed around Portland, is known for its fluffy texture and delicate, golden fry. Cake ones, like the old-fashioned, are made with sweet cake dough and baking soda or baking powder, then fried or baked for a crunchy shell and a denser, chewier, and more crumbly texture. But in Portland these are far from the only styles on offer.

Bring On the Bubbly

Champagne problems?
We run down how
to shop for Champagne
and other interesting
sparklers to help you
stock your holiday table
and impress your guests.

BY **SAM STONE**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **SUZANNE SAROFF**

FOOD STYLING BY **MAGGIE RUGGIERO**
PROP STYLING BY **LINDEN ELSTRAN**





What is it about popping a bottle of Champagne that makes any occasion feel special?

You probably know that to be a true Champagne, a wine must originate from France's Champagne region, made with Chardonnay, Pinot Meunier, and Pinot Noir grapes. Traditional Champagne averages around \$50 at the lower end, with seemingly no upper limit for the prestige pours, but there are plenty of other styles of sparkling wine, available at as many price points as there are bubbles in a glass.

Tahiirah Habibi, an Atlanta-based wine educator and sommelier with a penchant for bubbly, recommends cava, a diaphanous and toasty Spanish sparkling wine made from grapes like Xarel-lo, Macabeo, and Parellada. "If you want some really affordable great sparkling wine, it's comparable to Champagne," Habibi says. It can hover between \$10 to \$15, but bumping your budget a bit over \$30 will net you truly exemplary cava.

Crémant, a traditional-style sparkler made throughout France, is worth seeking out. Rules governing what grape varieties are used are not as prescriptive as in Champagne, so winemakers celebrate and experiment with their regional varieties. Part of Champagne's extended family, Crémant is similar in texture and style but with flavors like oyster shell, honey, and even herbal teas. Expect to pay from \$20 to \$50.

Finally, pét-nats can be a bit less self-serious than prestige Champagne. Made using the *méthode ancestrale*—a precursor to *méthode champenoise*—these typically have a looser, sometimes foamy bubble structure. Ranging from funky to fresh and fruity, pét-nats are proof positive that bubbly doesn't have to be snooty to be delicious.

Whether you're looking for a complex Champagne or a playful pét-nat, here's your 101 primer.



⋮
Falconry Pink Smash
Chenin Pét-Nat, Margaret
River, Australia (\$30)
Lush, velvety, grapefruit zest

⋮
Cruse Wine Co.
Tradition
Sparkling Wine, NV,
California (\$45)
Structured, creamy,
lemon zest

⋮
Recaredo Cava Brut
Nature Terrers,
Penedès, Spain (\$38)
Full-bodied, mineral,
green apple

Champagne Telmont
Réserve de la Terre,
Champagne, France (\$106)
Toasty, citrus, almond



Champs de l'Abbaye
2021 Crémant de
Bourgogne, Burgundy,
France (\$28)
*Nimble, fresh pastry,
jasmine blossom*



The Business of Bubbles

According to sommelier Victoria James, executive beverage director at Cote and Coqodaq, both in New York, the quality of a wine's bubbles depends on the method in which it was made. The méthode champenoise—where, among other things, a second fermentation within the bottle produces additional carbon dioxide—creates a highly pressurized environment. “The more pressure you have,”

James says, “the tinier the bubble, the more sharp it’ll feel on the palate.”

The Charmat method famously used in prosecco production creates less pressure, as the secondary fermentation occurs in a tank, creating “looser, more expansive bubbles,” whereas in pét-nats, you’ll find “broad, generous” bubbles. James says it’s worth noting that some carbonation escapes through the cork over the years, so older bottles and vintages might express less aggressive bubbles.



Wine Glossary

Blanc de blancs and **blanc de noirs** refer to the grapes used in the wine: Blanc de blancs refer to white grapes, whereas a blanc de noirs is made with red grapes exclusively.

Dosage refers to the amount of sugar added to bottles during their second fermentation. The less sugar added, the drier the final wine will be.

Frizzante and **spumante** designate the strength of carbonation in Italian sparkling wines. The former is gently sparkling, whereas the latter features stronger, more persistent bubbles.

Pétillant naturel, often shortened to pét-nat, is an ancient method of winemaking unattached to a specific grape or region. Additionally referred to as “méthode ancestrale,” these wines see only a single in-bottle fermentation, where naturally occurring yeasts which are left inside the bottle to continue fermenting. The result is a gently sparkling wine, which can express funkier flavors thanks to the natural yeasts.

Nonvintage bottles use a blend of grapes from several different years unlike wine from a specific vintage, which refers to grapes of one single harvest.

Forced carbonation is the practice of using machinery to carbonate a still wine instead of letting yeasts do the heavy lifting.

Secondary fermentation is one process by which a wine transforms into sparkling. First it ferments in a barrel or steel tank, then it's bottled, where remaining yeasts activate the second fermentation.

The Charmat method is a less-expensive way to complete a second fermentation. Wines made with the Charmat method, like most proseccos, undergo their second fermentation in a large-format steel tank.

Méthode champenoise, or **méthode traditionnelle**, is how all Champagnes are made—it refers to the practice of completing the second fermentation in the bottle.

A **cuvée** is each Champagne house's proprietary blend of grapes they mix into their specific expression of Champagne.

Lees are the spent yeasts left inside bottles during their second fermentation. “Resting on the lees” refers to the amount of time the wine matures in contact with these yeasts before disgorgement—the longer the wine rests, the more toasty flavors you'll taste.

MIX THE COVER GOLDEN HOUR MAKES 4

This aureate aperitif's hue is extra sunny due to the addition of bittersweet Suze, which amplifies the natural golden color of the Champagne. A piece of candied ginger added to the bottom of the glass fizzes and bubbles to make the drink truly sparkle.

- 1 4" piece ginger, peeled, cut into large pieces
- ½ cup (100 g) sugar
- 2 oz. Suze
Champagne or sparkling wine
(for serving)
- 4 pieces candied ginger

Bring ginger, sugar, and ½ cup water to a boil in a small saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring or swirling occasionally to dissolve sugar. Let ginger syrup cool. Remove ginger and discard.

Stir Suze and 2 oz. ginger syrup in a measuring glass to combine. Divide among 4 flute glasses, then top off with Champagne. Drop a piece of candied ginger into each glass.

DO AHEAD: Syrup can be made 1 month ahead. Transfer to an airtight container; cover and chill.

Tasting Notes



TOASTY

sparkling wines are typically those that have been aged—they have a distinctly bready, brioche aroma or flavor that comes from the yeast used to make the wine.

FRUITY

is often used to describe aromas or flavors of, well, fruit in a sparkling wine.

Often these are citrusy, like lemon or grapefruit, but notes of orchard fruits, stone fruits, and berries appear as well.

STRUCTURED

sparkling wines deliver a bit more vim on your palate. A wine's structure refers to its balance of taste, texture, aroma, and acidity. A well-structured wine will have an impressively subtle balance of everything all at once.

MINERAL

or minerality describes chalky or flinty flavors. These notes can help to balance sweetness and acidity.



CHILLIER TEMPS IN SOUTH CAROLINA'S LOWCOUNTRY CALL FOR BIG OYSTER ROASTS. THE OWNERS OF CHARLESTON'S BELOVED DOCK-TO-TABLE RESTAURANT CHUBBY FISH KNOW HOW TO HOST THE REGIONAL TRADITION WITH STYLE.

Low tide on Palm Island, a private marsh off Charleston, South Carolina's southernmost tip, holds an ethereal air just before sunset. Estuary life stirs behind the sprawling spartina grass, all burnished with an auburn glow. By winter, August's humid cloak is long gone, freeing up temperate breezes that whirl in from the cooling waters of the Atlantic—a time locals know in their bones as oyster season.

James London, chef and co-owner of Charleston's Chubby Fish, grew up relishing the region's distinct culinary traditions. From October through May, oysters that have matured throughout the summer months are ready to harvest. The Lowcountry, stretching along the Palmetto State's coastline, hosts an abundant population of wild oysters, which grow in clusters along coastal waterways and marshlines.

yard. These were formative moments for London, the sensory details enshrined into memory. "When you steam wild oysters, you're concentrating flavor, creating a broth inside the shell, just as you would roast bones for a browned chicken jus," he says.

"The richness and developed flavor that's coming from the oyster shells releases minerals and transfers onto the flesh of the oyster."

A roast, however, is more than the food itself, but rather an experience meant to be shared. On this particular late afternoon, London and his partner in life and work, Yoanna Tang, have assembled their

through sustainable fishermen and purveyors. Connecting the land, water, and food to diners is part of what makes Chubby Fish work. They extend the same ethos to their staff, a few of whom have never partaken in a proper roast. "It's always really wonderful to be able to share this with someone who's never gotten the full experience before," London says.

Soon the table is full, and by the third oyster pot, every guest is a pro at popping open the rugged shells, their varying condiment preferences claimed. Once the sun sets, the full picture clicks into place. What you're tasting isn't merely sea or brine; that

influence changes day to day, depending on the salinity and temperature of the water. When you're there, looking out at the tide pulled back, the oyster beds hemming the marsh-

COASTAL COMMUNION

These are unlike their farm-raised counterparts, which feature smoother shells and deep cups and are served raw over ice. Wilds are best eaten piping hot, not inside a restaurant but en plein air, at an oyster roast.

The practice of cooking oysters over open fire belongs to a far greater ancient tradition. Shell rings, archaeological sites scattered with mollusk shells, remain across the southeast, suggesting that people have gathered to share meals like this for centuries. These days folks convene beside a propane burner and steam bivalves by the pot. At festivals and dockside bars, some stick to more rustic means: firewood, flames, a wide metal sheet, sea-soaked burlap sacks, and a shovel for transporting each steaming batch to newspaper-clad tabletops. London enjoyed a similar setup throughout his childhood, when his father would prop an old car hood atop cinder blocks for their weekly roasts in the back-

staff out on Palm Island for a meal they likely won't soon forget. After a short boat ride, guests disperse to admire dolphins rollicking in the marsh's winding waterways. It's a rare reprieve. Now in its sixth year, Chubby Fish garners a three-hour wait, even on weekdays (spawning a cottage industry of paid line-waiters). By the end of 2024, London and Tang will open Seahorse next door—a cocktail bar with a menu, like its sister restaurant, inspired by coastal flavors from around the world.

They're off the clock today, but the couple inhabit their usual roles: London focused at the stove, Tang chattier, wrangling guests and prepping the deck for dinner—a dynamic that suits their temperaments and has contributed to Chubby Fish's meteoric ascent. Anchoring their success is a reverence for Charleston's plentitude of natural resources: a wealth in fish and seafood they obtain strictly

line, "there's no better way to get a sense of time and place," says London.

As is their dynamic, Tang is more matter-of-fact, ever mindful of the human dynamics. Oyster roasts are communal. "There's something about eating together and getting your hands dirty," she says. "Even if the person sitting next to you is a stranger. By the end of the night, you feel like best friends." Although for London, it all comes back to the oyster: "It tastes like the beautiful essence of the Lowcountry. If you close your eyes, it's the perfect bite."

GOOD EATS

The Chubby Fish crew (right) enjoying a mix of traditional and custom accoutrements, the latter including Champagne mignonette, comeback sauce, clarified butter, a floral and zippy house-made salt-fermented Fresno chile and aji dulce hot sauce, benne seed and grits loaves, caramelized French onion dip, and Monte Rio Cellars x Chubby Fish Sauvignon Blanc Koji wine.

**PHOTOGRAPHS
BY COLBY DEAL**





GET ROASTIN'

WANT TO THROW YOUR OWN ALFRESCO FEAST? HERE'S HOW (NO SHUCKING REQUIRED).

TO COOK

Prewashed wild oysters, sold by the 40-lb. bushel (one bushel is enough for about six hungry people)

A propane burner

A 60-qt. pot or larger with steamer basket

TO ENJOY

Oyster knives (one per person)

Rags or kitchen towels

A large table covered with newspaper or a tablecloth

Saltines, lemon wedges, hot sauce, and cocktail sauce (for serving)

Place a steamer basket in a large pot and pour in water to come to the bottom of basket. Bring to a boil, then arrange oysters in basket and cover pot. Cook until half of the oysters have opened. Remove steamer from pot and turn out oysters onto table.

Guests should use the towels to hold the oysters (they're hot and sometimes sharp). Some of the shells might still be closed. Don't worry: Because of the steam, "the hard work is already knocked out," London says. The knife should slide in and open the shell easily. Top each morsel with your sauces of choice.

A Note on Pea Crabs

The tiny stowaways you might spot in your steamed oysters are harmless. These soft crustaceans are a sign of a healthy oyster population, says owner of Charleston Oyster Company Tom Bierce (pictured left, harvesting wilds). "Think of it as a bonus crab," he says. "They just add a little crunch."

SHELL GAME

"If you want to fully appreciate oysters, you gotta put the shells back!" Tom Bierce says. In 2001, South Carolina initiated an oyster shell recycling program, one of the first of its kind in the country. Shells replanted into the wild help sustain oyster reefs, which fortify the Lowcountry's shorelines and ecosystems. Without them, "this whole area would look completely different," says Bierce. If you're buying bushels, return the shells to your local recycling drop-off location. Learn more at saltwaterfishing.sc.gov/oyster.html.



CLOCKWISE
FROM TOP LEFT:
Yoanna Tang;
oysters hot and
ready; guests with
James London (far
left, in plaid shirt)

RECIPES BY KENDRA VACULIN

Showstopper

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRAVIS RAINEY

Take your pick between two centerpieces for your holiday table: a vegetarian Wellington stuffed with spiced carrots and a walnut–goat cheese spread, or a succulent, shreddable pork roast glossy with an orange marmalade glaze. Or make both—the more the merrier.

FOOD STYLING BY LUCIANA LAMBOY

Mains

PROP STYLING BY GERRI WILLIAMS





A carrot wellington, a long, cylindrical pastry filled with carrots and other ingredients, is served on a white, scalloped-edge plate. The wellington is cut into three pieces, with the top piece showing a filling of carrots and a creamy sauce. A small glass dish containing a light-colored, creamy sauce sits next to the wellington. A silver carving knife with a white handle is placed to the right of the plate. The entire dish is set on a dark red, textured tablecloth. In the bottom left corner, a glass of beer is partially visible.

CARROT
WELLINGTON
P. 73



ORANGE-GLAZED
ROAST PORK

ORANGE-GLAZED ROAST PORK

8–10 SERVINGS

A jar of orange marmalade and a sprig of rosemary pack a ton of wintry flavor into this celebratory centerpiece. Five hours of hands-off braising time turn skinless, bone-in pork shoulder impossibly tender, with a shiny, citrusy glaze. You should be able to find one or both of the two varieties of this cut, Boston butt or picnic shoulder, fairly easily. Either will work in this recipe. Boston butt is a flatter section from the top of the shoulder with a thick fat cap on one side and a bone that juts up vertically. It's a good pick because it is typically sold skinless and, if you are trimming the fat yourself, its shape makes it easy to work with. Picnic shoulder sits below the Boston butt, farther down the front legs, and is a rounder cut, with less fat and a bone running horizontally through the middle. It often comes with the skin on and because of its shape is slightly more difficult to trim. Ask a butcher to do it for you, or do it yourself by making small cuts with your sharpest knife.

- 1 7–9-lb. skinless, bone-in pork shoulder, fat cap trimmed to ¼", patted dry
- 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
- Freshly ground pepper
- 1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, unpeeled, quartered
- 1 head of garlic, halved crosswise through the equator
- 1 large sprig rosemary, plus more for serving
- 2 cups red wine
- ¾ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes, divided
- 2 large oranges
- 1 cup orange marmalade (one 12-oz. jar)
- ½ cup sherry vinegar or red wine vinegar

Season pork shoulder all over with salt and black pepper (about 1 tsp. salt per pound is a good rule of thumb, so don't be shy here). Let sit at room temperature at least 30 minutes and up to 2 hours.

Preheat oven to 300°. Heat oil in a large Dutch oven or other heavy pot over medium-high. Add onion and garlic, cut sides down, and cook until browned underneath, about 4 minutes. Transfer to a plate.

Arrange pork shoulder, fat side down, in same pot and cook, undisturbed, until browned underneath, about 5 minutes. Carefully turn pork over by rolling away from you to avoid spattering and cook until browned underneath, about 5 minutes.

Tuck onion, garlic, and 1 rosemary sprig around pork (fat side should be up at this point). Add wine, 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, ½ tsp. red pepper flakes, and 2 cups water. Cover pot; transfer to oven. Braise 3–3½ hours (depending on the size of your shoulder; go the full time if it's 9 lb.). Uncover pot and roast pork until meat shreds easily with a fork, about 2 hours.

Meanwhile, cut 1 orange in half and squeeze juice into a cold small saucepan (you should have about ⅓ cup); thinly slice remaining orange into rounds. Add marmalade, vinegar, a pinch of salt, and remaining ¼ tsp. red pepper flakes to orange juice in pan, set over medium-high heat, and cook, stirring and scraping down sides of pot occasionally with a heatproof rubber spatula, until thickened and syrupy, 7–9 minutes. Set glaze aside (it will continue to thicken as it cools; reheat before using if too thick).

Spoon or brush top of pork (any parts you can see above braising liquid) with about a third to half of the glaze. Tuck orange slices around pork. Roast until crust on pork is sticky, 15–20 minutes.

Carefully transfer pork to a platter and spoon remaining glaze over. Tuck orange slices in pot around pork along with a few fresh rosemary sprigs. Transfer juices from pot to a small bowl to spoon over individual servings if desired.

CARROT WELLINGTON

8–10 SERVINGS

Is this the year the vegetarian main makes the biggest splash on your holiday table? In this meat-free Wellington, whole roasted carrots coated in a honey–curry powder glaze sit atop a spread made of more carrots, roasted shallots, toasted walnuts, and a bit of cheese for richness, which all get encased in puff pastry. If you can find Dufour puff pastry near you, use it. It is made with all butter and browns readily and evenly.

- 4 large shallots, peeled, quartered lengthwise
- 2 lb. medium carrots, scrubbed, trimmed
- Extra-virgin olive oil (for drizzling)
- 1 Tbsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
- 1 cup raw walnuts
- 4 oz. goat cheese, room temperature
- 3 cup Gruyère, coarsely grated (about ¾ cup)
- ½ cup finely chopped parsley, divided
- 1 Tbsp. plus ½ tsp. curry powder
- Freshly ground pepper
- 2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 Tbsp. honey

- 1 sheet frozen puff pastry (one 14-oz. package or half of a 17.3-oz. package), thawed
- All-purpose flour (for surface)
- 1 large egg, beaten to blend
- ¾ cup plain whole-milk yogurt
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice

Preheat oven to 425°. Arrange shallots and carrots on a rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle with oil, season with salt, and toss to coat. Roast until carrots are mostly tender, 27–32 minutes. Transfer half of carrots to a cutting board and coarsely chop; set remaining whole carrots on baking sheet aside.

Meanwhile, toast walnuts on another rimmed baking sheet in a single layer, tossing halfway through, until golden brown, 8–10 minutes. Transfer to a food processor; reserve baking sheet. Very finely chop nuts; transfer to a large bowl.

Transfer chopped carrots and roasted shallots to food processor; process until a rough paste forms. Transfer to bowl with walnuts. Add goat cheese, Gruyère, ¼ cup parsley, 1 Tbsp. curry powder, and 1 Tbsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt; season with pepper and mix well.

Stir mustard, honey, and remaining ½ tsp. curry powder in a small bowl to combine. Drizzle over reserved whole carrots on baking sheet and toss to coat.

Roll out puff pastry on a lightly floured surface to a 16x13" rectangle. Arrange so a long side is facing you. Spread walnut mixture over pastry, creating a rectangle as long as the carrots and leaving a 1" border across top and bottom of pastry. Pile glazed carrots on top of walnut mixture toward bottom of pastry (point skinny ends in opposite directions as needed to create even stacking). Working with the edge closest to you, roll pastry up and over carrots, then continue to roll up pastry all the way to the other side; press and pinch dough to seal. Turn pastry seam side down and transfer to reserved baking sheet; twist ends to seal, trim off any excess pastry, and tuck ends underneath Wellington to make sure filling is completely encased. Chill until pastry is firm, at least 30 minutes.

Reheat oven to 450° if needed. Brush top and sides of Wellington with egg. Using a small knife, cut slits no longer than 1" in a decorative pattern across entire surface of dough. Bake Wellington until pastry is golden brown, 30–35 minutes. Let cool slightly on baking sheet.

Meanwhile, process yogurt, lemon juice, and remaining ¼ cup parsley in clean food processor to combine. Season yogurt sauce with salt and transfer to a small bowl.

Using 2 metal spatulas if needed, transfer Wellington to a platter. Serve with yogurt sauce alongside.

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HAUTE COOKIES BY HAND

PROP STYLING

by

MAGGIE
DIMARCO



PHOTOGRAPHS BY
*
JOE
LINGEMAN

FOOD
STYLING BY
JESSE SZEWCZYK





EVERYTHING WE LOVE ABOUT PEPPERMINT BARK—sweet and creamy white chocolate contrasting with the crispy, delicate crunch of bright red minty candy—is nestled in the center of these extra-fudgy soft-baked cookies. The trick to a perfectly soft cookie, one that's thick, plush, and chewy all the way through, is to think of cooling as part of the baking process. Piping hot cookies will continue to firm up on warm baking sheets as they rest on the counter. They'll be even softer than you might expect straight out of the oven, but don't be tempted to let them overbake. And while the cookies are still wonderfully malleable, the chocolate and crushed candy topper can press right into place. Use candy canes, not peppermint candies, for the most striking presentation and crunchiest, shatter-in-your-mouth texture.

JESSE SAYS

* * *

"Be sure to use Dutch-process, not natural, cocoa powder in this recipe. My go-to is Guittard Cocoa Rouge (\$10 for 8 oz.; guittard.com) for its intense chocolaty flavor and high fat content, but Hershey's Cocoa Special Dark (\$5 for 8 oz.; shop.hersheys.com) also works."

PEPPERMINT BARK COOKIES

BAKER'S NOTE

It's important to gently spoon flour into your measuring cup and lightly level the surface with a knife or spatula. Scooping directly into a flour container and packing the measuring cup will result in too much flour per cup and drier, misshapen cookies. Better yet, just weigh it out.

MAKES ABOUT 14

- 3 full-size or 6 mini candy canes
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter
- ½ cup (packed; 100 g) dark brown sugar
- ½ cup (100 g) granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla extract
- ½ tsp. peppermint extract
- 1½ cups (188 g) all-purpose flour
- ½ cup (45 g) Dutch-process cocoa powder
- 1½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1 tsp. Morton kosher salt
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 4-oz. white chocolate bar

Place racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and preheat to 350°. Place candy canes in a resealable plastic bag; seal bag and coarsely crush candy with a rolling pin or a skillet. Set candy canes aside.

Heat butter in a small saucepan over medium, stirring constantly, until it foams, then browns, about 4 minutes. Transfer to a large heatproof bowl and add brown sugar, granulated sugar, and 1 Tbsp. water; whisk vigorously until sugars are dissolved and mixture is smooth and elastic, about 2 minutes. Add egg, vanilla extract, and peppermint extract and whisk until smooth, about 1 minute. Add flour, cocoa powder, salt, baking powder, and baking soda and

mix with a rubber spatula until a soft dough forms and no pockets of dry flour remain. Let dough sit, uncovered, at room temperature 15 minutes. (This will allow it to stiffen up slightly, making rolling it into balls easier.)

Using a #30 cookie scoop (about 2 Tbsp.) and working one at a time, scoop out portions of dough and roll into smooth balls. Divide between 2 parchment-lined baking sheets, spacing at least 2" apart (about 7 per sheet).

Bake cookies, rotating pans top to bottom and front to back halfway through, until puffed slightly and cracks have formed, 8–10 minutes. Let cookies cool on baking sheets 2 minutes. (They should be very warm but not piping hot.)

While cookies are baking, cut or break white chocolate into irregular angular shards that will fit nicely in the centers of cookies (about 1x1").

Gently press chocolate pieces into centers of cookies (they should sit almost flush with tops of cookies; you can use 2 pieces in a cookie if shards are small), then return to oven and bake just until tops of chocolate pieces are barely melted, about 30 seconds. Immediately sprinkle reserved candy canes on top. Let cookies sit on baking sheets at room temperature 4 hours to allow chocolate to harden. (Or, chill 30 minutes to speed up the process.)

DO AHEAD: Cookies can be baked 4 days ahead. Store airtight at room temperature.

A SPRINGFORM PAN IS THE SECRET to the perfectly geometric shape of these eye-catching confections, no rolling pin or cookie cutters needed. Pressing the dough into the pan easily molds it into a flat, even circle that's a cinch to score into straight-edged wedges before baking. Because powdered sugar is so fine, it dissolves right into the dough (versus the sometimes grainy, snappier texture that granulated sugar can provide), giving the shortbread a super short, meltingly tender crumb. Draped in a Hello Kitty pink glaze made with tart pomegranate juice and finished with a glittery dusting of homemade orange-scented sugar sprinkles, these cookies are as delicious as they are party-worthy.

POMEGRANATE-GLAZED SHORTBREAD WEDGES

MAKES 12

- Nonstick vegetable oil spray (for pan and spatula)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup ($1\frac{1}{2}$ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 5 cups (550 g; or more) powdered sugar, divided
- 1 Tbsp. plus $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. Diamond Crystal or $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. Morton kosher salt, divided
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (188 g) all-purpose flour
- Zest of 1 medium orange
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup coarse white sanding sugar or raw sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh lemon juice
- 3 Tbsp. pomegranate juice

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: a

9"-diameter springform pan

Place a rack in middle of oven and preheat to 350°. Lay a sheet of parchment paper on base of pan. Place band on top and clamp sides shut so they hold parchment in place. Lightly coat parchment and sides of pan with nonstick spray. Whisk butter, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (55 g) powdered sugar, 1 Tbsp. vanilla bean paste, and 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or $1\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. Morton kosher salt in a large bowl until sugar is

dissolved and mixture is smooth. Add flour and mix with a rubber spatula until a soft dough forms and no pockets of dry flour remain. Transfer dough to prepared pan; spread into an even layer all the way to the edges with an offset spatula coated with nonstick spray. (It's okay if dough is not perfectly even. You can fix it after chilling.) Freeze, uncovered, 10 minutes.

Using your hands, press dough down to smooth out any imperfections and make even. Using a long, thin knife, cut dough into 12 wedges (like a pizza), going all the way through the dough. Bake shortbread, rotating pan halfway through, until golden brown, 27–32 minutes. Transfer pan to a wire rack and let shortbread cool in pan until no longer too hot to the touch but still warm. Remove sides from pan and cut along lines of wedges with a serrated knife to separate cleanly. Let shortbread cool completely.

Meanwhile, combine orange zest and sanding sugar in a small bowl and rub together with your fingers until very fragrant and sugar is bright orange, about 2 minutes. Spread out on a plate or a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet; let dry.

Whisk lemon juice, pomegranate juice, and remaining $4\frac{1}{2}$ cups (495 g) powdered sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. Diamond Crystal or $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. Morton kosher salt, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. vanilla bean paste in a medium bowl until smooth. Glaze should be very thick but still slightly pourable (like thick honey). If it's too thin, add more powdered sugar a tablespoonful at a time until the right consistency. (If not using immediately, cover with plastic wrap, pressing directly onto the surface, to keep from drying out.)

Working with 1 wedge at a time, dip top of shortbread into glaze (keeping sides unglazed), holding it above bowl to allow excess to drip back into bowl. Place, glaze side up, on a wire rack and immediately sprinkle generously with orange sugar. (Touch up glaze with an offset spatula before adding sugar if there are any bare spots. You might not use all of the glaze or orange sugar.) Let cookies sit 1 hour for glaze to set up before serving.

DO AHEAD: Shortbread can be baked 3 days ahead; store airtight at room temperature. Shortbread can be glazed 3 days ahead; store airtight in a single layer at room temperature.

JESSE SAYS

* * *

"Sanding sugar goes by a few different names, including sugar sprinkles and sparkling sugar. I use Wilton White Sparkling Sugar (\$5 for 8 oz.; wilton.com), which is clear and shiny. You can also use raw sugar, although the final color of the sprinkles will skew brown instead of vibrant orange."

BAKER'S NOTE

If you don't have a springform pan, you can lightly coat a cake pan with nonstick vegetable oil spray, then scrunch up a piece of parchment paper so it covers the bottom and partially goes up the sides instead. The edges of the cookies might not be as clean, but the glaze will cover most imperfections. You can swap unsweetened cranberry juice in for the pomegranate juice.





CHEWY, SALTY-SWEET, and loaded with bold nutty flavor, this festive take on classic Midwestern scotcheroos (peanut butter cereal bars topped with butterscotch and chocolate) swaps in a plethora of pistachio cream—transforming the nostalgic dessert into a delightfully balanced and smidgen less sweet treat. The dark chocolate ganache is made with just chocolate, salt, corn syrup (also used to give the puffed rice portion its distinctive chew), and a touch of water. The water loosens everything up, ensuring that the topping isn't too hard or brittle but is instead chocolate-truffle-like—so it spreads and sets easily while clinging to the salty roasted pistachios scattered over the bars.

PISTACHAROOS

MAKES 18

- Nonstick vegetable oil spray (for pan)
- ¼ cup (50 g) granulated sugar
- ½ cup plus 2 Tbsp. light corn syrup
- 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, divided
- ⅔ cup pistachio cream or pistachio butter
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract
- Green food coloring (for tinting; optional)
- 3 cups puffed rice cereal
- Vegetable oil (for hands)
- 4 oz. semisweet chocolate, chopped, or semisweet chocolate chips
- ¼ cup finely chopped salted roasted pistachios

Lightly coat an 8x8" baking pan, preferably metal, with nonstick spray, then line with 2 sheets of overlapping parchment paper, leaving a

generous overhang on all sides. Lightly coat parchment with nonstick spray. Heat granulated sugar, ½ cup corn syrup, and 1½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1 tsp. Morton kosher salt in a large saucepan over medium, stirring often, just until sugar is dissolved and mixture is simmering, about 3 minutes. (Do not bring to a rapid boil.) Reduce heat to low, add pistachio cream and vanilla bean paste, and mix until pistachio cream is melted and mixture is combined. Stir in a few drops of food coloring to enhance the vibrant green hue if desired. Immediately add cereal; mix gently to coat. Scrape into prepared pan (try to plop it down over entire bottom, not just in the center) and very gently press into a flat, even layer with oiled hands or flat-bottomed measuring cup, taking care not to smash or compress too much. (Pressing too hard can

result in dense, overly chewy bars.) Set aside.

Microwave chocolate, remaining 2 Tbsp. corn syrup, and remaining ½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt in a microwave-safe bowl on high in 15-second bursts, stirring after each, until chocolate is melted, about 30 seconds total. (Mixture will appear broken and oily at this point, but don't fret.) Add 1 tsp. water and vigorously whisk until mixture is smooth and glossy. (Alternatively, heat in a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water, stirring, until melted, then whisk in water; do not let bowl touch water.) Pour chocolate mixture over reserved bar and, working quickly, spread into a thin, even layer with an offset spatula. Sprinkle pistachios on top; press in slightly to adhere. Let sit at room temperature at least 2 hours to allow chocolate to set. (Or, chill 45 minutes to speed up the process.)

Using parchment paper, pull bar out of pan; transfer to a cutting board. Cut into a 6x3 grid to make 18 bars.

DO AHEAD: Bars can be made 4 days ahead. Store airtight at room temperature.

JESSE SAYS

* * *

"Well-stocked grocery stores sell a variety of pistachio creams and butters in the nut butter section. My favorite is Peppertux Original Pistachio Butter (\$15; peppertuxfarms.com). It's deeply saturated in color, silky smooth, and made with nothing more than pistachios and sugar."

BAKER'S NOTE

Depending on what brand of pistachio cream or butter you use, the color of these bars can vary from beige to hunter green. To compensate for a less-than-saturated product, add a few drops of green food coloring to the sugar mixture to reach your desired intensity before adding the cereal.

THESE STRIKING SHORTBREAD COOKIES *might look like they took hours of effort to make, but the process couldn't be easier. Two quick doughs—one beige from earthy, bittersweet tahini and one tinted brown with the addition of cocoa powder—come together in minutes. Each is rolled into a log, cut into lengthwise quarters, then reassembled to make a contrasting pattern. Rolled in black and white sesame seeds and baked until golden, they are proof that a simple-to-make cookie can look and taste like a how-did-you-do-it? stunner.*

CHOCOLATE-TAHINI SLICE-AND-BAKE COOKIES

MAKES ABOUT 24

- 1½ cups (166 g) powdered sugar, divided
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature, divided
- ⅔ cup well-stirred tahini, room temperature, divided
- 3 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 2 tsp. Morton kosher salt, divided
- 3 tsp. vanilla extract, divided
- 2½ cups (313 g) all-purpose flour, divided
- ½ cup (45 g) Dutch-process cocoa powder
- ½ cup raw white and/or black sesame seeds

Whisk ¾ cup (83 g) powdered sugar, ½ cup (1 stick) butter, ⅓ cup tahini, 1½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1 tsp. Morton kosher salt, and 1½ tsp. vanilla extract in a medium bowl until sugar is dissolved and mixture is smooth. Mix in 1½ cups

(188 g) flour with a rubber spatula until no pockets of dry flour remain. Set tahini dough aside.

Whisk remaining ¾ cup (83 g) powdered sugar, ½ cup (1 stick) butter, ⅓ cup tahini, 1½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1 tsp. Morton kosher salt, and 1½ tsp. vanilla extract in another medium bowl until sugar is dissolved and mixture is smooth. Mix in cocoa powder and remaining 1 cup (125 g) flour with spatula until no pockets of dry flour or cocoa powder remain.

Roll chocolate dough into about a 7½x2½" log; tightly wrap in plastic, twisting ends to help shape log. Repeat with reserved tahini dough (try to make logs the same thickness.) Chill logs on a flat surface, turning and rolling every 30 minutes, to keep round, at least 2 hours and up to 1 day.

Let dough sit at room temperature 15 minutes.

Unwrap and, using a long, thin knife, cut each log in half lengthwise. Lay each half cut side down; cut each in half lengthwise to create 4 pieces total. (If logs are brittle and crack when cut, let sit to warm 5 minutes longer.) Brush cut sides of dough with water, then press together 2 tahini pieces and 2 chocolate pieces, alternating the colors, to re-form into a log. Repeat with remaining 4 pieces of dough to make a second log. Wrap each log in plastic and gently roll on counter several times to re-form and help cut sides adhere to one another. Twist ends of plastic to help shape. Chill logs at least 2 hours and up to 1 day.

Place racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and preheat to 325°. Unwrap logs; let sit at room temperature 15 minutes.

Brush logs lightly with water. Place sesame seeds on

a rimmed baking sheet or in a 13x9" baking dish and roll logs in seeds, gently pressing into sides to adhere, until evenly coated. Save any leftover seeds for another use. Trim ends off of each log, then cut logs into ½"-thick slices, rotating after each cut to help logs keep their shape and pressing gently together if they start breaking apart. (If logs are brittle and crack when cut, let sit to warm 5 minutes longer.) Divide between 2 parchment-lined baking sheets, spacing at least 2" apart. Freeze 10 minutes.

Bake cookies, rotating baking sheets top to bottom and front to back halfway through, until golden brown, 24–26 minutes. Let cool on baking sheets. (Cookies might be a bit soft when they come out of the oven, but they will firm up as they cool.)

DO AHEAD: Cookies can be baked 4 days ahead. Store airtight at room temperature.

JESSE SAYS

* * *

"Make sure to thoroughly stir your tahini before you measure it. Be patient; it can take a few minutes to mix. Skipping this step may result in either an oily or a dry cookie. I like Seed + Mill Organic Tahini (\$10 for a 10.93-oz. squeeze bottle; seedandmill.com) because it doesn't tend to separate as much as other brands and is easy to shake up."

BAKER'S NOTE

When cutting the logs, use a long, thin, and very sharp knife. This will give you the cleanest lines and prevent the dough from smushing and losing its shape. It's also important to chill your dough, so don't rush the process; you want the dough to be chilled through but not freezing cold. The latter will cause it to become brittle and it will crumble as you slice it.





THESE DRAMATICALLY CRAGGY COOKIES call upon Chinese five-spice to lend them their warming complexity. The combination of flavors in the spice blend—usually from a mix of star anise, fennel seeds, cloves, cinnamon, and peppercorns—starts out reminiscent of the aromatic notes of a classic molasses cookie. There’s added depth, however, from the pleasantly tingly pepper, astringent clove, and cooling, licorice-like star anise. These clever treats also decorate themselves, forming abstract patterns as the cookies bake and their sugar coating bursts open (see the Baker’s Note below for more on how to prep the dough to create the most impressive crackles).

FIVE-SPICE CRACKLE COOKIES

MAKES 16–18

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (packed; 133 g) dark brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mild-flavored (light) molasses
- 2 Tbsp. Chinese five-spice powder
- 1 large egg yolk
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract
- 2¾ cups (344 g) all-purpose flour
- 1¾ tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100 g) granulated sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (83 g) powdered sugar, sifted

Place racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and preheat to 375°. Cook butter in a small saucepan over medium heat,

stirring constantly, until it foams, then browns, about 4 minutes. Immediately transfer to a large heatproof bowl, scraping in any brown bits stuck to bottom of pan. Add brown sugar, molasses, and five-spice powder and whisk vigorously until sugar is dissolved and mixture is smooth and emulsified, about 2 minutes. (It will look oily at first, but keep whisking.)

Add egg yolk and vanilla bean paste; whisk vigorously until combined and slightly lightened in color, about 2 minutes. Add flour, salt, and baking soda and mix with a rubber spatula until a soft dough forms and no pockets of dry flour remain.

Place granulated sugar in a small bowl. Using a #20 cookie scoop (about 3 Tbsp.) and working one at a time, scoop out portions of dough and roll into smooth balls.

Roll balls in granulated sugar to thoroughly and generously coat, then divide between 2 parchment-lined baking sheets, spacing at least 2" apart (about 9 per sheet). Roll dough balls in granulated sugar again to create an even, thicker layer and return to baking sheets. (This might seem excessive, but don’t skip this step; see Baker’s Note below.) Freeze, uncovered, 15 minutes.

Place powdered sugar in a small bowl. Working quickly and one at a time, coat balls in powdered sugar, rolling and pressing in slightly between your hands to create an even, generous layer that covers the entire exterior (like you are making a snowball); place back on baking sheets, spacing at least 2" apart.

Bake cookies, rotating baking sheets top to bottom and front to back halfway

through, until puffed slightly and cracks have formed, 12–14 minutes. Let cookies cool on baking sheets. (They will deflate a bit as they sit.)

DO AHEAD: Cookies can be baked 1 day ahead. Store airtight in a single layer at room temperature.

JESSE SAYS

* * *

“Chinese five-spice powder can be found in the spice aisle of most well-stocked grocery stores. Ingredients and ratios differ between brands—some contain tingly Sichuan peppercorns, others earthy and mellow white pepper or mildly hot black pepper. Choose wisely based on your own preferences and heat tolerance.”

BAKER’S NOTE

Tossing the dough balls in granulated sugar before chilling might seem unnecessary, but it creates a strong protective barrier that prevents the powdered sugar from dissolving while baking, resulting in the most striking presentation. And freezing them for exactly 15 minutes—no more, no less—solidifies the outside of the dough while keeping the centers soft, resulting in an exterior that cracks dramatically as the cookies spread when baking.

all that GLITTERS

Sometimes your statement dish just needs an extra sparkle. A getup that truly shines, that makes everyone ooh and aah when it reaches the table.

Edible glitter, a decorative product that adds a tinselly glint to food surfaces, is the diamond of the season. Pinterest-loving bakers who swirl sparkles into cookie batter and pastry chefs who sprinkle gold dust on wedding cakes have long known this. We want to let you in on the fun.

Party hosts and food stylists are proving that you can liven up food with glitter in original and playful ways. Why limit its uses to cookies and cakes? In Berlin, creative director Hannah Kleeberg dipped cherries in iridescent pink syrup for glitzy dinner parties. At the Rosewood London, food artist Imogen Kwok coated peanuts in shimmery pearlescent dust as an aperitif she developed for the hotel's menu. With a few shakes, edible glitter can turn nearly any food into a festive, even campy, feast.

If you want to dress up a dish with a little sparkle and cheer, here's how to do it.



GET GLITTERY, GO SAVORY

Edible glitter is usually flavorless, which means that it's much more versatile than sprinkles. Although it's commonly dusted onto sweet treats such as cakes and doughnuts, it can add a glimmer to savory fare too. Salty popcorn, tangy lemon, peppery curries—any flavor profile works as a canvas.



HOT AND COLD

You can use edible glitter on food of any temperature, but high heat may cause it to melt or lose its sparkle. And, although it finishes a dish, it's not to be baked or cooked into one.



SAFETY MANUAL PSA

Check the label on your bottle of glitter. You'll see it described as one of two types used for food decoration: "edible" or "nontoxic." Edible glitter means the FDA has approved it for consumption in the US, so it requires an ingredient list. That usually consists of starch, food coloring, and stabilizers and preservatives (look for words like maltodextrin, dextrose, and gum arabic). Nontoxic glitter is technically safe to eat, but it's like crayons or chalk —not harmful if a curious child took a bite, but not meant as part of a regular diet.



MAKE LIQUID GOLD

You might have heard of Starbucks' glitter-infused Unicorn Frappuccino or Shake Shack's Valentine's Day strawberry milkshake embellished with whipped cream and glitter. Drinks and glitter have been frequent and photogenic friends. But the effect can also look subtle, like an elegant sheen when mixed into a crystal clear martini. Pair glitter with a clear or lightly colored glass to show off its gleam and serve it soon, as some glitters settle over time.

Mix: Add a fine powder into the drink (or a few dashes to a cocktail shaker before shaking) for a dainty, even shimmer.

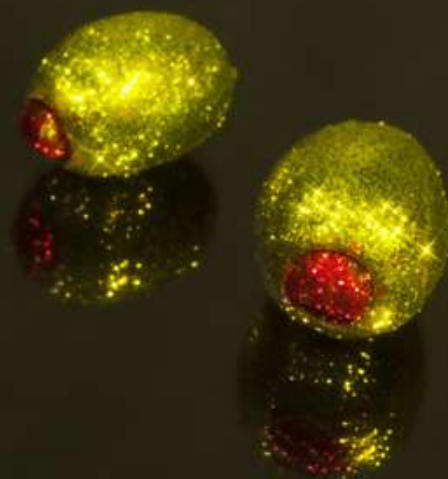
Sprinkle: Add glitter to its surface just before serving.

Brush: Use a decorating brush to top off garnishes like lemon wedges, berries, or olives for a flourish of brilliance.



TAKE A DIP

Dips, sauces, and condiments deserve to shine too. If you're feeling extra bold, try swirling gold glitter into nacho cheese dip or red sparkles into ketchup.



50 SHADES OF SPARKLE

Think of edible glitter as a garnish that enhances the look of spices, herbs, and other seasonings atop a dish. This is where it gets colorful—literally. It comes in many shades of metallic and rainbow, so it can match and highlight the hues of your presentation for a bright, cohesive look. A few ideas:

Silver = Sugar, salt + Gold = Parmesan + Red = Paprika, chili flakes
Green = Pesto, parsley, cilantro + Brown = Cocoa powder, chocolate flakes



DUSTING TIP

Take a small mesh strainer and softly tap it over your dish so the glitter showers down like powdered sugar onto a cake.

FAQ

How long does edible glitter last?

It doesn't expire, but it can lose its quality over time. If it looks clumpy, discolored, or smells weird, it's best to throw it out.

How should I store it?

In a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight.

Is it allergenic?

It depends on the ingredients. Check labels for potential allergens such as gluten or specific food colorants.

Is it vegan?

Depends on the ingredients.

Is there a limit to how much I can use?

Don't let us stop you from chasing your biggest, glitteriest dreams.

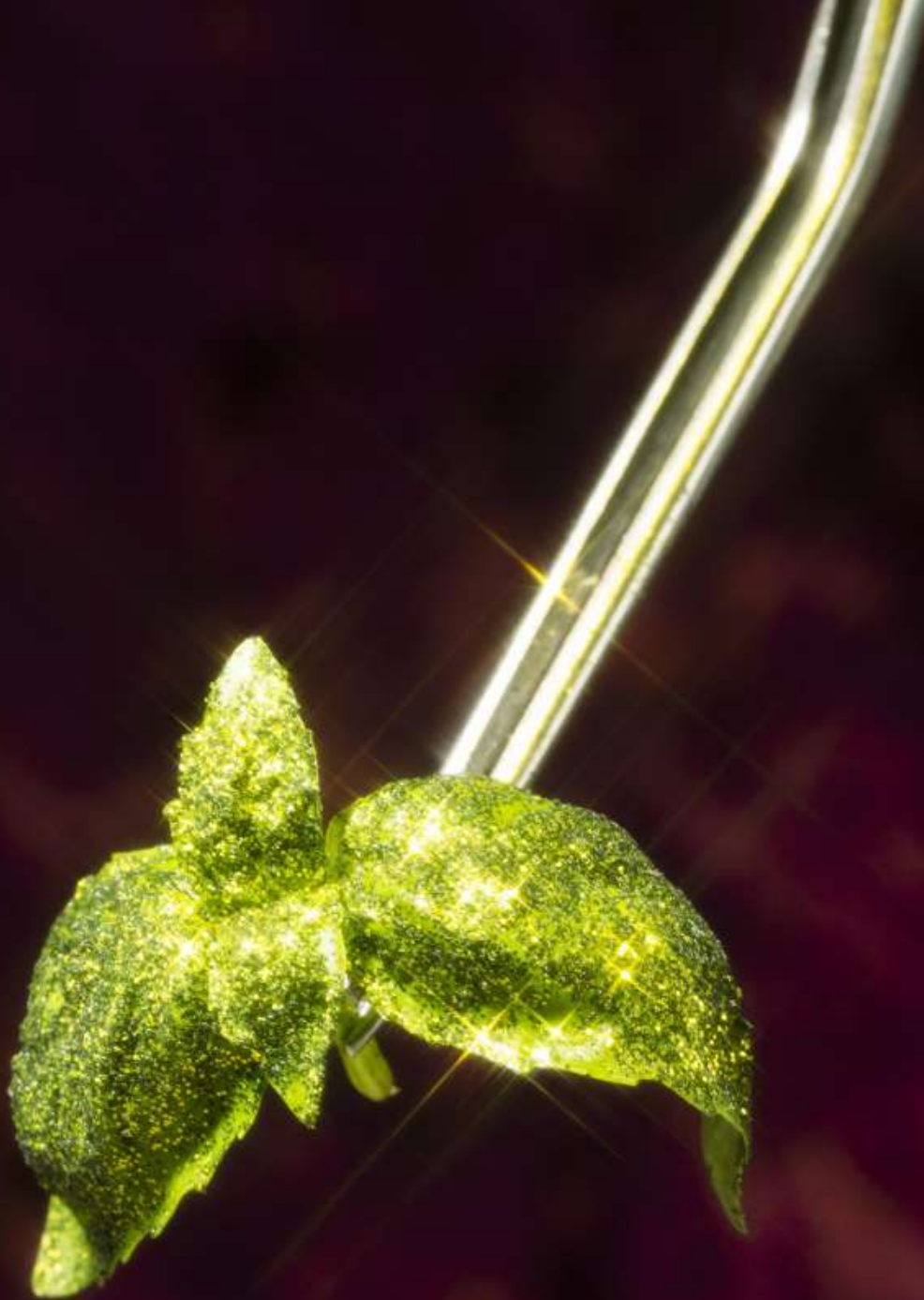
Can I use craft glitter on food?

Definitely not.



AN ALL-PURPOSE GLITTER WE LOVE

We love Fancy Sprinkles, an edible glitter producer based in Los Angeles. The brand offers powders, gels, sprays, and even cocktail decorating kits.



GLITTER GLOSSARY

Spray:

A liquid spray that adds a thin layer of shimmer or shadow.

Beads:

Tiny round pieces that create a 3D effect.

Gel:

A thick gel that can be used for drawing on cakes or drizzling over hot dogs.

Luster Dust:

A superfine powder that can be mixed with alcohol to create a paint-like spread.

Petal Dust:

Similar to luster dust with a matte finish, usually used for coloring fondant flowers.

Disco Dust:

A grainy, sprinkle-like powder with a loud color, like a disco ball. Beware: Typically nontoxic, rarely edible.

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AWAKENING THE ORCHARD

FOOD STYLING BY
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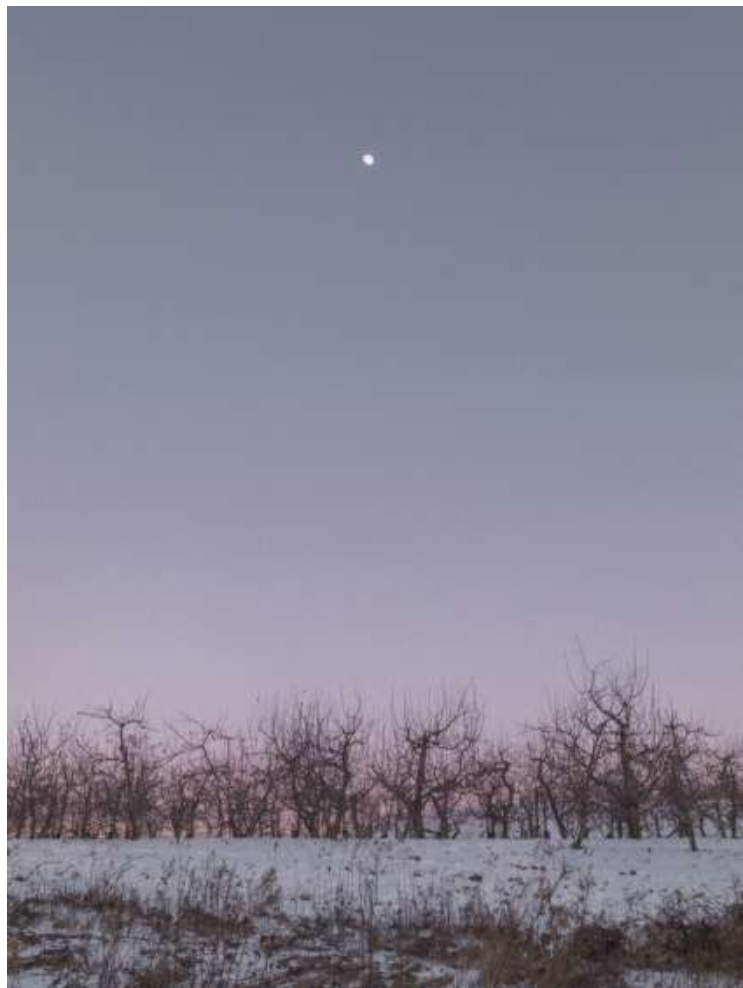
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**BLACK PEPPER
PANISSES WITH CHEDDAR
P. 98**

At Rose Hill, a farm and cider making operation in New York's Hudson Valley, a community gathers each year to breathe life into the snowy fields—and make a lot of noise in the process



"WASSAIL!" Hundreds of revelers roar at once, thrusting homemade torches into the freezing air and banging pans together with cacophonous glee. It's stadium-loud, a din to wake the dead.

January in New York's Hudson Valley is typically a quiet time. Summer's giddy rollicking is a distant memory. The fall foliage that sets the hills ablaze come October has long scattered, rustling leaves underfoot giving way to the hush of snow. With the holidays in the rearview mirror, most who call the region home gratefully give in to the slowness of the season. Everything in the valley becomes muted; hibernation is the order of the day.

But on one particular afternoon each year, folks break from their slow pattering to gather in the orchards of 200-year-old Rose Hill Farm with a very specific mission: to make a lot of noise.

Since 2022, cider sommelier Dan Pucci and Madeleine Osborn have hosted their idiosyncratic take on an English wassail celebration, the ancient tradition of visiting apple orchards in the wintertime to fête the trees and promote a prosperous harvest in the

year to come. The singing, chanting, and DIY percussion serves to not only symbolically rouse the trees from their slumber but to scare off bugs, blight, and whatever bad spirits might endanger them. But more than anything, it's an opportunity for the community to come together and feel a sense of connection with the land and its bounty. "It's a way to get people out of their little holes this time of year," Pucci jokes.

Would-be wassailers of all ages arrive at the farm's timber frame taproom early in the afternoon to fashion elaborate crowns from foraged plants and wrap torches. The fruits of previous years' harvests flow freely, whether in the form of sweet sparkling apple juice or any number of hard ciders, wines, and coferments crafted by Rose Hill's head winemaker Matt Sanford (p. 97). When the setting sun starts its slow dive toward the Catskill Mountains to the west, the several-hundred-strong crowd begins its exuberant procession up a hill to a pair of gnarled Spartan apple trees, two of the oldest in the orchard. There, the names of the over 50 varieties of apples, plums, peaches, and other fruits cultivated on the property are

read aloud, each one followed by a thunderous "wassail" from those assembled. Mutsu. WASSAIL! Jonagold. WASSAIL! Transcendent Crab. WASSAIL! (It is worth noting that in the first year organizers named the farm's apples but neglected the other fruits; coincidence or not, that year saw a disastrous stone fruit harvest.) Pucci and Sanford dramatically saber a bottle of cider with a machete, anoint the trees, and everyone tumbles down the hill where a bonfire made from discarded Christmas trees throws sparks high into the darkening sky.

"There's no other time in the year where it feels this way on the farm," Sanford reflects. "Everyone is having this big shared experience, appreciating the earth and the community, in a place where they get their sustenance throughout the year."

The party continues for just a few more hours—8 p.m. feels pretty late when the sun sets at 5—before the merrymakers disperse, making for homes warmed by crackling woodstoves and the cozy solitude of the season, prepared to wait until the trees' first new buds signal winter's end.



CREAMY CIDER-
BRAISED CHICKEN
AND LEEKS
P. 98

PEAK CIDER

With independent producers cropping up across the country and more diverse styles on offer, there's never been a more exciting time to drink American cider than right now

BY BETH DEMMON

After a long hiatus, American cider is on the rise once more. Some 200 years ago it was the beverage of choice for Indigenous tribes and European settlers alike, an easy way to preserve plentiful apple harvests and transform them into something not only delicious but often safer than water. But times changed. Everything from the widespread migration from farms to cities during the Industrial Revolution and the resulting ascent of domestic beer production to Prohibition left the American cider industry in shambles. Yet today thousands of producers in all 50 states are working to reinvent cider and introduce the full scope of expressions to a new generation of consumers.

Some producers prefer to stick to traditional methods and styles while others are drawing inspiration from other categories like beer, wine, or even cocktails. But all have one thing in common—they're helping accelerate cider's return as a beloved beverage. Here are the makers changing the landscape of American cider.

1

FABLE FARM FERMENTORY - LEONA
BARNARD, VERMONT

Vermont's long winters and mild summers make it ideal for growing apples with high levels of acid, which can result in beautifully complex ciders. Fable Farm crafts one-of-a-kind products that embrace seasonal variation and reflect the local terroir. One example is Leona, made from foraged and wild apples, La Crescent and Frontenac Blanc grapes, and seaberrys that have all fermented together. While coferments like Leona may not fall under a traditional cider designation, they give us a glimpse into the possibilities of fruit-centric fermentation. fablefarmfermentory.com

2

DWINELL COUNTRY ALES - ALMIRA
GOLDENDALE, WASHINGTON

Dwinell's hands-off approach to fermentation allows their beers, wines, and ciders to express themselves as nature intended. Almira, Dwinell's Normandy-inspired canned cider, is a blend of Domaines, Marie Ménard, and Muscadet de Lense apples that gets wild-fermented in the can using the ancestral method, better known as pétillant naturel (or pét-nat). It's bubbly, bright, and earthy, with notes of lemon zest and baking spice—the epitome of a French cidre. Crack a can alongside a fresh loaf of bread smeared with a soft French cheese. countryales.com



3

ROSE HILL FARM - BATTY PYDER
RED HOOK, NEW YORK

Pears are incredibly hard to work with. Their delicate skins are prone to bruising, meaning they often rot before they're ripe enough to harvest. But one sip of perry, as pear ciders are known, or a pear-apple coferment like this one from Rose Hill Farm, and it's easy to understand why cider makers put in the effort. Pears contain a not easily fermentable sugar called sorbitol, which gives a characteristically round mouthfeel and lingering sweetness. Batty Pyder combines foraged and cultivated perry pears, along with Hewe's Crab, Stoke Red, and Bramley's Seedling apples from their Hudson Valley farm, offers an unfiltered taste of pear's ethereal magic. rosehillferments.com

4

BAUMAN'S CIDER COMPANY
- KINGSTON BLACK
GERVAIS, OREGON

The vast majority of cider around the world requires blending types of apples together since very few varieties contain the requisite balance of acids, tannins, and sweetness to create a harmonious product by themselves. Of the prized few used to make high-quality single-variety ciders, the Kingston Black is considered one of the best. Bauman's spontaneously fermented Kingston Black cider showcases all the dimensions of the bittersharp apple, with a high acid content shining against a rich, full, tannic mouthfeel. This is one to sip slowly, and ponder. baumanscider.com

5

SON OF MAN - SAGARDO
COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE, OREGON

Basque cider is one of the more recognizable styles in the world. Funky, tart, and dry, it's food-friendly and traditionally poured from high above the glass to rouse carbonation. Son of Man utilizes Oregon-grown apples to pay homage to this special cider making tradition, and Sagardo is their flagship. It's aged in oak barrels called foeders, which soften the tannins and results in a distinctly bright and fun take on Spanish cider. sonofman.co

6

POTTER'S CRAFT CIDER - SOD CUTTER
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

Sod Cutter, Potter's Craft Cider's category-bending pineapple margarita gose cider, draws inspiration from both sour beers and tropical cocktails to create something completely new. With zero sugar and 5.5 percent ABV, Sod Cutter is an unfussy and refreshingly fruity concoction with big whiffs of pineapple on the nose, crisp apple in the finish, and a light citrusy sweetness balanced against a hint of sea salt. If you can, grab a can for on-the-go enjoyment, or opt to savor it at their picturesque 100-year-old tasting room only 15 minutes from downtown Charlottesville. potterscraftcider.com



4



5



6

"EVERYONE IS HAVING THIS BIG SHARED EXPERIENCE...IN A PLACE WHERE THEY GET THEIR SUSTENANCE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR."

—MATT SANFORD

BLACK PEPPER PANISSES WITH CHEDDAR

4 SERVINGS

Made from chickpea flour, panisses are french-fry-like fritters common in parts of Italy and Southern France. Hot, crisp, and salty, they bear all the characteristics of a great snack to pair with drinks. The earthy, almost astringent, quality of the chickpea flour is offset by a not inconsiderable amount of indulgent butter and aged sharp cheddar, just enough to render the insides of the panisses soft and custardy while the outsides remain delicately crunchy. Shower more cheese over the panisses while they're still hot so some of it melts into a delectable thin, lacy layer.

- 1 cup (125 g) chickpea flour
- 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
- ¾ tsp. coarsely ground pepper, plus more
- 4 Tbsp. (½ stick) unsalted butter, cut into pieces
- 2 oz. extra-sharp cheddar, finely grated (about ½ cup), plus more for serving
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for pan
- ½ cup vegetable oil

Whisk chickpea flour, 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, ¾ tsp. pepper, and 2¼ cups water in a cold medium Dutch oven or other heavy pot until no lumps of chickpea flour remain; add butter. Place over medium heat and cook, whisking constantly, until the consistency of thick cake batter and a thin film forms on bottom of pan, 12–18 minutes (as mixture thickens, switch to a spatula for easy stirring). Remove from heat and mix in 2 oz. cheddar.

Generously coat sides and bottom of a 9"-diameter cake pan with olive oil (about 1 Tbsp.). Scrape batter into pan and smooth surface with a small offset spatula or a spoon. Chill batter until set, at least 45 minutes.

Uncover batter and invert disk onto a cutting board (if it clings to pan, wiggle a small spoon between batter and edges of pan to help release). Cut into long ¼"-thick strips. Heat vegetable oil and remaining ½ cup olive oil in a medium heavy skillet, preferably cast iron, over medium-high

until an instant-read thermometer registers 350°. Working in 2 or 3 batches, fry batter strips, turning several times with a fish spatula or 2 forks, until golden all over and crisp, about 5 minutes per batch. Transfer panisses to a wire rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet or paper towels to drain; sprinkle lightly with salt.

Pile panisses on a platter. Top generously with more cheddar; season with pepper.

DO AHEAD: Batter can be made 2 days ahead. Cover pan and keep chilled.

CREAMY CIDER-BRAISED CHICKEN AND LEEKS

4 SERVINGS

With the blistered, glistening skin of good roast chicken and the sauciness of a stew, this is a quietly elegant, cozy dinner. Braising the leeks in the cider prior to roasting breaks down their sturdy outer layers, ensuring a wondrously silky outcome. The tang of fresh cider is echoed in the crème fraîche, which creates a creamy yet light sauce. Serve with a simply dressed green salad.

2½–3-lb. skin-on, bone-in chicken leg quarters (about 4 large)

- 1 Tbsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¾ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
- Freshly ground pepper
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 6 medium leeks (about 1 lb.), white and pale green parts only, halved lengthwise, sliced on a deep diagonal into 3"-long pieces
- 4 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- 1 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups fresh apple cider
- ¼ cup Calvados (apple brandy; optional)
- ¼ cup finely chopped tarragon, plus leaves for serving
- 1 7–8-oz. container crème fraîche
- 1 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- Country-style bread and lemon wedges (for serving)

Place a rack in middle of oven; preheat to 350°. Sprinkle chicken all over with 1 Tbsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¾ tsp. Morton kosher salt; season generously with pepper. Pour oil into a cold large

ovenproof high-sided skillet. Arrange chicken, skin side down, in pan and set over medium heat. Cook, undisturbed, rotating pan around on burner for even browning, until skin is deep golden brown and chicken releases easily from pan, 14–17 minutes. Transfer chicken to a plate and arrange skin side up.

Pour off all but 1 Tbsp. fat from pan; discard or save for another use. Return pan to medium heat; cook leeks, garlic, and flour, stirring, until garlic is fragrant and flour is lightly toasted, about 30 seconds. Add cider, Calvados (if using), and ¼ cup tarragon, scraping up any browned bits. Increase heat to high and bring liquid to a simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, until sauce is reduced by about two thirds, 9–12 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in crème fraîche, vinegar, and Dijon mustard and season generously with pepper. Taste sauce and season with salt if needed.

Arrange chicken, skin side up, over leeks and roast, uncovered, until chicken is cooked through and an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of a thigh registers at least 165°, 35–40 minutes.

Scatter tarragon leaves over chicken and sauce and serve with bread and lemon wedges for squeezing over.

DARK CHOCOLATE-ORANGE GINGERBREAD CAKE

8–10 SERVINGS

This dessert presents the glorious complexity and contrast of flavors in gingerbread in the form of a delightfully springy cake that you can mix entirely by hand. The orange zest serves as a bright link, marrying the spices in the cake to the shiny chocolate glaze above. Throw out the cake rule book and mix the batter here with vigor; it will ensure an even and structured crumb.

CAKE

Nonstick vegetable oil spray or room-temperature unsalted butter (for pan)

- 1½ cups (188 g) all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- ½ cup mild-flavored (light) molasses



**DARK CHOCOLATE-ORANGE
GINGERBREAD CAKE**

- ½ cup (packed; 100 g) dark brown sugar
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 Tbsp. finely grated ginger (from about a 3" piece)
- 1 Tbsp. finely grated orange zest (from 1 medium orange)
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. freshly ground pepper
- 1 large egg

GANACHE AND ASSEMBLY

- 3.5–4 oz. 70% dark chocolate, chopped
- ½ cup heavy cream
- ¼ tsp. Diamond Crystal or Morton kosher salt

CAKE Place a rack in middle of oven and preheat to 350°. Line bottom of an 8"-diameter cake pan with a parchment paper round. Lightly coat parchment and

pan with nonstick spray. Whisk flour, salt, baking powder, and baking soda in a medium bowl. Mix molasses and ½ cup water in a measuring glass.

Whisk brown sugar, butter, ginger, orange zest, cinnamon, and pepper in a medium bowl until light and creamy, about 5 minutes (if butter isn't soft enough and mixture is hard to mix, smash butter with a rubber spatula at first to combine, then switch to the whisk). Add egg; whisk until emulsified, about 1 minute. Add dry ingredients in 3 additions, alternating with molasses mixture in 2 additions, beginning and ending with dry ingredients. Vigorously mix until combined, about 2 minutes (batter may look curdled and that's okay).

Scrape batter into prepared pan and smooth surface with a small offset spatula or a spoon. Bake until cake springs back when gently pressed, 40–45 minutes. Transfer pan to a wire rack and let cake cool in pan 10 minutes. Run offset spatula

around sides of pan, then invert cake out onto rack and let cool completely.

GANACHE AND ASSEMBLY Place chocolate in a medium bowl. Heat cream and salt in a small saucepan over medium just until beginning to simmer; pour over chocolate. Let sit 2 minutes, then whisk gently until smooth. Let ganache cool until pourable, about 30 minutes. (Or, chill, stirring halfway through, until pourable, about 10 minutes.)

Spoon ganache over cake (leave upside down; this will give you a nice flat top) and, using offset spatula, spread evenly over surface, letting some drip down sides. Let cake sit until ganache is fully set, about 30 minutes. (Or, chill about 10 minutes.) Transfer to a cake stand or platter to serve.

DO AHEAD: Cake can be baked 1 day ahead; store, airtight, at room temperature. Cake can be glazed 1 day ahead; store, covered with a cake dome or large bowl, at a cool room temperature.

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Last Call

A little something to sip on from Epicurious's vast archives

BUTTERED-RUM HOT CHOCOLATE

RECIPE BY KAT BOYTSOVA

Don't believe what they've told you: You can indeed improve on a classic, especially when you marry the best of two worlds. This cold-weather tippie combines the cozy spice flavors of buttered rum with silky-smooth hot chocolate, creating a drink that's luscious and complex. It's an after-dinner drink and a luxurious dessert in one steaming hot mug.

In our update, butter and rum supercharge the chocolate, while pantry staples like cinnamon and nutmeg complement the delicately spiced notes of dark rum. The hot chocolate starts with melted bittersweet chocolate and is sweetened by brown sugar. Topping the velvety blend with fresh whipped cream is optional, but is absolutely encouraged.

Buttered-rum hot chocolate can do double duty as a nonalcoholic drink too. Just leave out the rum and you'll find yourself sipping something akin to a hot chocolate with a hell of a lot of personality. —*Sam Stone*

Heat **2 oz. bittersweet chocolate, chopped**, and **½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into pieces**, in a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of barely simmering water (do not let bowl touch water), stirring, until smooth. Remove bowl from heat; whisk in **½ cup (packed) light brown sugar, 1 tsp. ground cinnamon**, and a **pinch of kosher salt**.

Bring **2½ cups water** to a boil in a small saucepan. Remove from heat and whisk in chocolate mixture and **¾ cup dark rum**. Divide hot chocolate among mugs and top with **whipped cream** and **freshly grated nutmeg**. Makes 4



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